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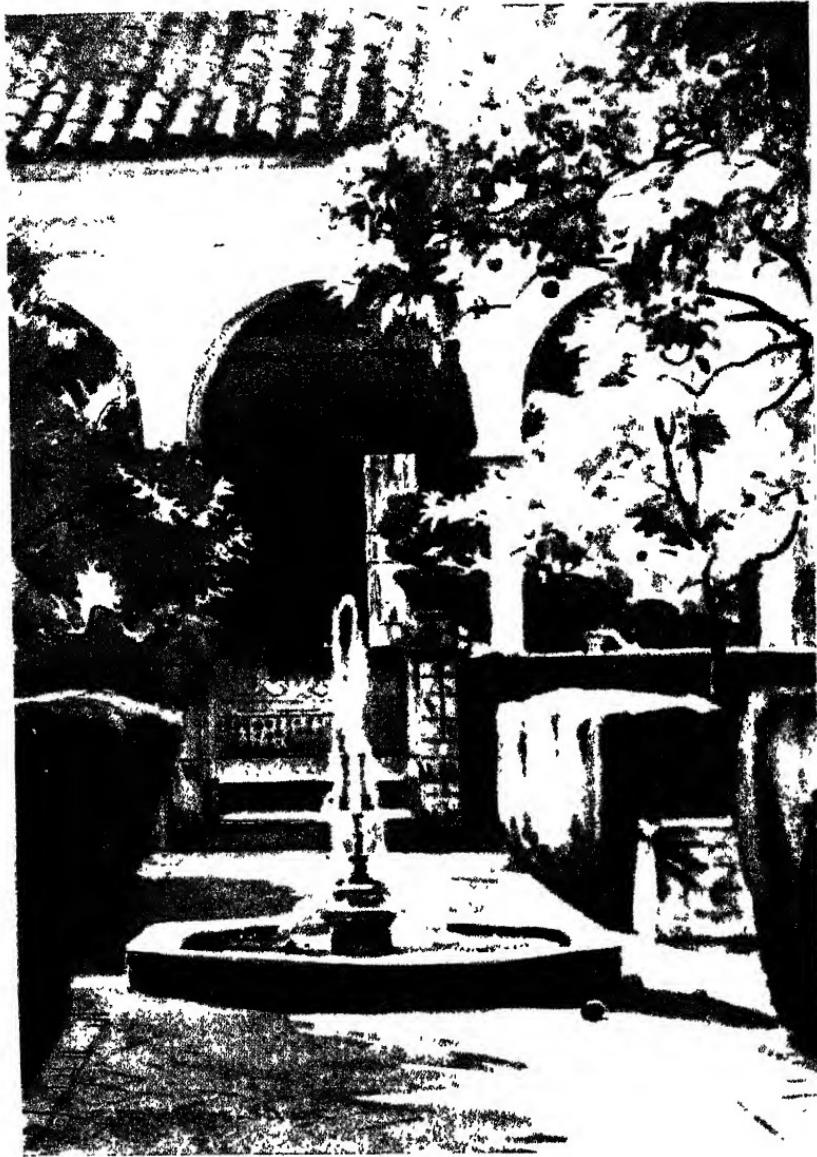
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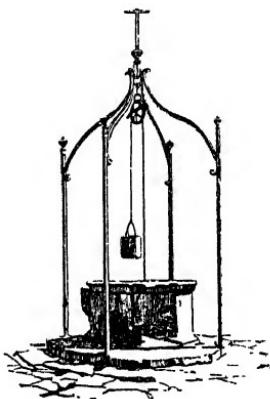


PAVILION OF CHARLES V  
The Alcázar

# SPANISH GARDENS

THEIR HISTORY  
TYPES AND  
FEATURES

By  
C. M. VILLIERS-STUART  
Author of  
“Gardens of the Great Mughals”



LONDON  
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## PREFACE

**I**T is just fifteen years since I first began to study Spanish gardens. My interest was aroused through a study of Indian water-gardens, for I found that the two subjects supplement each other. To understand the structural purpose and charm of the irrigated garden, it is necessary to see both the plan and the planting intact. This is by no means a simple undertaking. In modern times these two features have become widely separated. The whole width of what was once the Moslem Empire lies between the complete plan in the East and the planting in the West, between the great architectural lay-out of gardens such as the Kashmir Shahlimar Bagh and the Taj Mahal at Agra and the traditional planting of the Generalife at Granada and the Alcázar at Seville. Each country has managed to retain one aspect of the Moslem Paradise Garden. In India the architectural shell survives, but the wars and unsettled conditions of the eighteenth century, and contact with the English romantic taste in the nineteenth, have largely destroyed traditional gardening. In Spain the great gardens of the Arab Kalifs have disappeared, but their system of planting remains almost untouched. As M. Fouquier points out in *Des Divers Styles de Jardins*, “Espagne est actuellement le seul pays du monde où l'on retrouve de nos jours des jardins du treizième siècle—tels qu'ils ont été créés.”

Early Moorish and Hispano-Moorish gardens like the Generalife and the Alcázar are not the only expression of traditional Spanish gardening. The seventeenth and eigh-

## P R E F A C E

teenth centuries can show many typical examples; and gardens such as Cuzco, El Retiro, Raxa, Casa Gomis and El Laberinto, being private gardens, are perhaps more characteristically Spanish than the better-known royal pleasure-grounds of Aranjuez and La Granja.

In Spain, as in other southern countries, house and garden are closely interlinked. They must always be looked at as one composition. The word "carmen" (house and garden), in use in Granada, has the same shade of meaning as the Oriental word "bagh." The Roman villa, which included park and farm, is more correctly translated by the term "quinta."

No book has been published in England on Spanish gardens, but two dealing with the subject have appeared in America and one in France. Mr. and Mrs. Byne's very interesting work is confined to Andalucian gardens and patios and those of Majorca. Miss Nichol's book contains more general information and includes Portuguese gardens in its scope. M. Gromort makes a special study of the five principal royal gardens, and he writes with great force and point on the subject of garden design. But the unique relation of Spanish gardens to garden-craft in East and West has not yet, I think, been fully brought out.

My thanks are due to those kind friends in Spain and England who have helped me in my present endeavour. I must particularly thank the President of the Comisario Real del Turismo y Cultura Artistica of Spain, the Marqués de la Vega Inclán, who gave me every assistance in his power; the Duquesa de Parcent who helped me at Ronda; Mr. and Mrs. Temple, Professor de los Ríos and Mr. Davenhill at Granada; Señor Don Juan y Diaz at Seville; the Condessa de Valle de Canet, Conde de Figols, Mr. Norman King and Mademoiselle Marie Lack at Barcelona; Mrs. Byne, Señora Doña Mercedes Chacon de Bonsoms and Señor Don

P R E F A C E

Faustio Morell in the Island of Majorca; and the Conde and Condessa de Albiz at La Granja. To the Editor of the *Edinburgh Review* I am indebted for permission to incorporate part of two articles of mine dealing with Spanish gardening, and I have to thank Miss Ursula Holding for the black-and-white drawings made from my photographs, and Mr. Tristam Ellis, for placing at my disposal his copy of *Les Délices de l'Espagne* from which several illustrations have been reproduced in the text. The plan on p. 29 is by the late H. Inigo Triggs, and appeared in his *Garden Craft in Europe*.

The majority of the photographs used in this book were taken by myself, but of the remainder I am indebted to Mrs. Ness for those on Plates vii, ix; to Mr. A. F. Calvert, for that on Plate xi; and Plate lxxxv to Lady Scott. The subjects on Plates viii, xiii, xiv, xv, xvi, xxix, xxx, xxxix are by Mr. Herbert Felton, F.R.P.S.; those on Plates xviii, xxii, xxxv, xxxviii, xli, xlii by Señor Mas of Barcelona; and Plates xliv and xlv by Señor Trujol. I am indebted to Firma Diederiche of Jena and Messrs. J. M. Dent & Co., Ltd., for the line illustration on p. 75, reproduced from Gothein's *A History of Garden Art*. My thanks are also due to the Trustees of the British Museum for the reproductions on Plates ii and iii.

CONSTANCE MARY VILLIERS-STUART.

Beachamwell Hall, Norfolk.

March 1929.

SHORT LIST OF  
BOOKS ON SPANISH GARDENS

- Le Livre de l'Agriculture d'Ibn-al-Awam.* Circa 13th century.  
Traduit de l'arabe par J. Clement-Mullet. Published 1864.
- Les Délices de l'Espagne.* Juan Alvarez de Colmenar. Published 1715.
- Voyage Pittoresque et Historique de l'Espagne.* Comte Alexandre Laborde. Published 1812.
- The Spanish Journal of Elizabeth, Lady Holland.* Edited by the Earl of Ilchester. Published 1910.
- Jardines de España.* Santiago Rusiñol. Barcelona. Published 1914.
- Garden Craft in Europe.* H. Inigo Triggs, F.R.I.B.A. London. Published 1913.
- Des Divers Styles de Jardins.* M. Fouquier and A. Duchêne. Paris. Published 1914.
- Spanish Gardens and Patios.* M. and A. Byne. New York. Published 1924.
- Spanish and Portuguese Gardens.* R. S. Nichols. Boston. Published 1924.
- Jardins d'Espagne.* Georges Gromort. Paris. Published 1926.

## GLOSSARY OF SPANISH TERMS USED IN THE BOOK

<i>Alameda</i>	public promenade.
<i>Alcázar</i>	citadel.
<i>Azul</i>	azure, purple iris.
<i>Azulejos</i>	tiles.
<i>Carmen</i>	house-and-garden (Granada).
<i>Comedor</i>	dining-room.
<i>Cortijo</i>	country-place (Andalucia).
<i>Cueva</i>	cave-dwelling.
<i>Glorieta</i>	rondel, round pavilion.
<i>Huerta</i>	orchard.
<i>Mirador</i>	roof-terrace.
<i>Reja</i>	iron grille.
<i>Sala</i>	saloon.
<i>Secano</i>	unirrigated ground.
<i>Sierra</i>	mountain-chain.
<i>Son</i>	estate (Balearics).
<i>Torre</i>	semi-fortified manor-house (Catalonia).
<i>Vega</i>	irrigated valley.
<i>Verja</i>	railing (round a pool or reservoir).
<i>Zaguán</i>	entrance-hall.

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## Chapter I

### WARP AND WOOF

The Loom of Destiny is set,  
And may the shuttle say  
What strands shall form the Carpet of Desire?  
Mixed strands, from every land a ray  
Shall weave the Beauty to which all aspire.

*Eastern saying.*

**N**O European country in the past has undergone such constant change as Spain. In none has there been such a welter of conflicting civilizations. Sailors from Syria and Crete, soldiers from Carthage and imperial Rome, invaders from the North, conquerors from the South, each in turn swept over the land. Capitals and centres of culture replaced one another in bewildering succession; berian Elché, Roman Mérida, Toledo of the Visigoths, Arab Cordova, Moorish Granada, each had their day before the final Christian victory and the rise of Madrid.

All these racial contacts have set their mark on the Spanish house and garden, but the strongest is the earliest and least obvious. At first, as one travels up and down the Peninsula, familiar forms catch the eye—perhaps a Roman aqueduct bringing the town water, or a French Gothic cathedral with a Flemish painting over the altar, an Italian Renaissance tomb adorning the nave. Further south in Andalucia, the Moorish influence is equally striking on account of its unfamiliarity in a European setting. But gradually, among the multitude of these confusing styles, one influence will be found occurring and re-occurring,

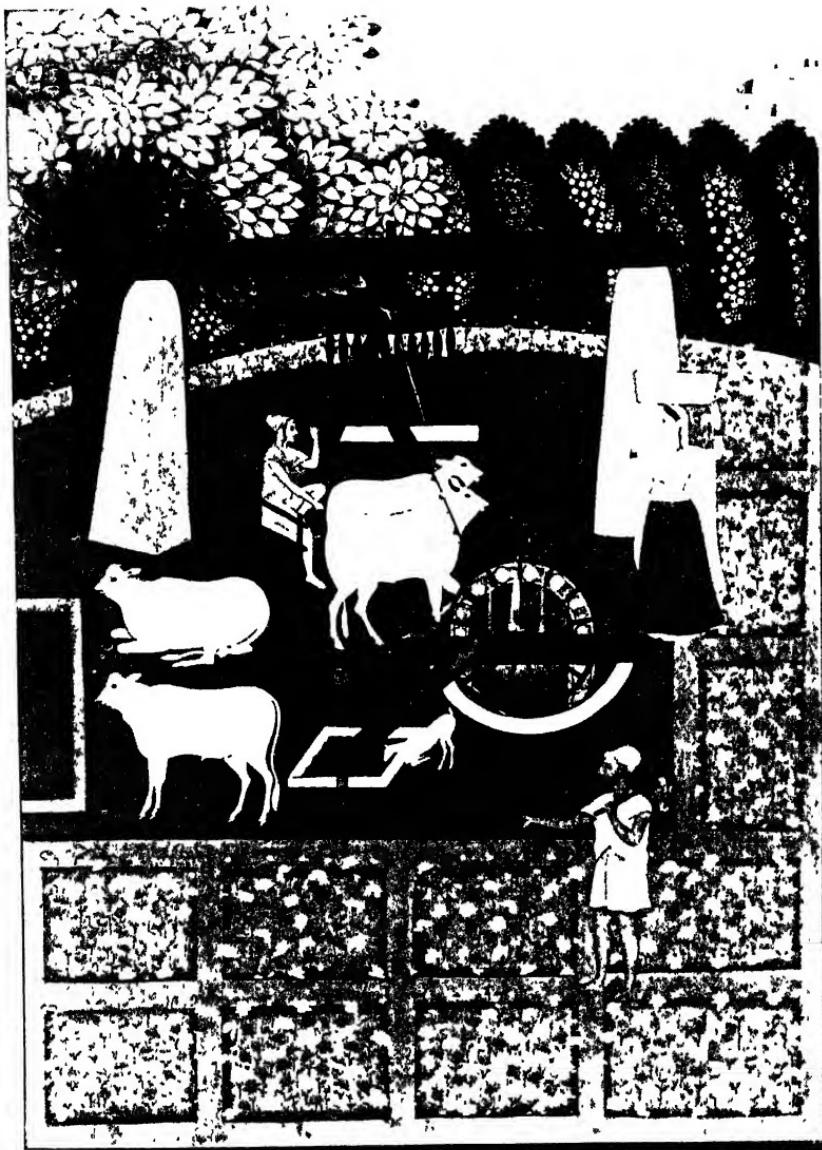
sometimes in Byzantine guise, sometimes expressed in terms of Moslem art. Then it will be realized that these two elements which reached Spain along the African coast have proved stronger and more lasting than ideas from Latin Europe, because they harmonized with the underlying spirit of the Peninsula—the tenacious Iberian spirit that through the ages has given continuity to the country's life and art, through all conquests has survived and proved the binding and transmuting force, the Spanish element in Spain.

The Lady of Elché in the Louvre, with her calm impulsive smile and her curiously rich wheeled headdress, has just those qualities of massive strength combined with complicated, even riotous decoration, that mixture of the mysterious and grandiose with the grotesquely bizarre, unfamiliar for the most part in European countries, but recognizable almost everywhere in Spain. Each flowering period of Spanish art shows these fundamental traits at work. They are plainly evident in the Mudejar and Plateresque styles no less than in the Spanish Gothic. And the subsequent Baroque, in which Mudejar and Plateresque coalesced, carried into the garden the same feeling for massive construction combined with involved and complicated detail.

The Roman contribution to Spanish domestic architecture, as might be expected, was something concrete. The patio, the internal courtyard, is still the most distinctive feature of the Spanish home. Like the hall of an English country house, it is the general meeting-place of the family. It forms a delightful open-air sitting-room kept cool in the intense heat of summer by its fountain and vine-trellis awning and by the solid shade of its high enclosing arcades. And these courtyard gardens of Andalucia, directly descended from the atrium of Roman days, show how suited to the climate and how charming the "villa urbana" must have been. But the Roman colonial villas in Spain with their



THE EMPEROR BABAR FEASTING IN A GARDEN  
Cypress and Fruit Tree Motif

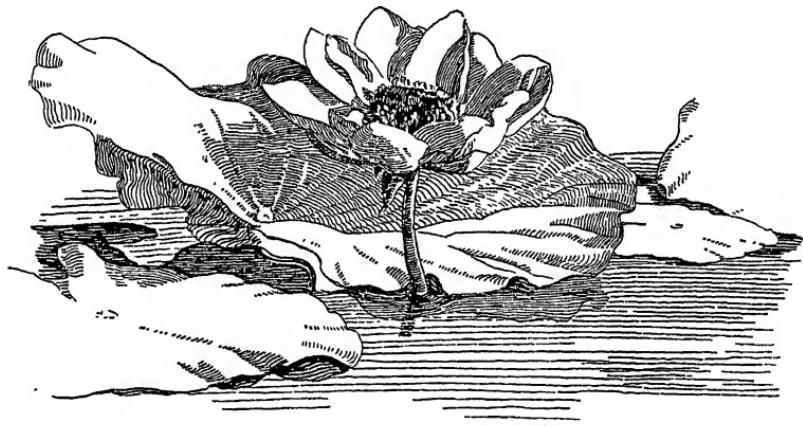


IRRIGATING A GARDEN

Kangra School

open courts and undefended gardens fell an easy prey to the Northern raiders. With the downfall of the Pax Romana the gentle art of gardening was submerged in the Peninsula.

The next influence to appear after the gradual resettlement of the country by the Christian Visigoths is one from further East. "The Syrians are great gardeners, taking



Lotus flower and leaf, *Nelumbium speciosum*.

exceeding pains," as Pliny reminds us in his *Natural History*, and the new Christian churches in Syria and at Byzantium soon displayed this love of nature in their carvings and splendid mosaics. A description of Santa Sophia, recited by the court poet Paulus on Christmas Eve, 563 A.D., opens: "Whosoever raises his eyes to the beauteous firmament of the roof, scarce dares to gaze on its rounded expanse, sprinkled with the stars of heaven, but turns to the fresh green marble below; seeming as it were, to see flower-bordered streams of Thessaly, and budding corn and woods thick with trees; leaping flocks, too, and twining olive-trees, and the vine with green tendrils and the deep blue peace of the summer sea." There also was "stone of crocus colour,

glittering like gold," and "marble, blue and green, like cornflowers in grass."

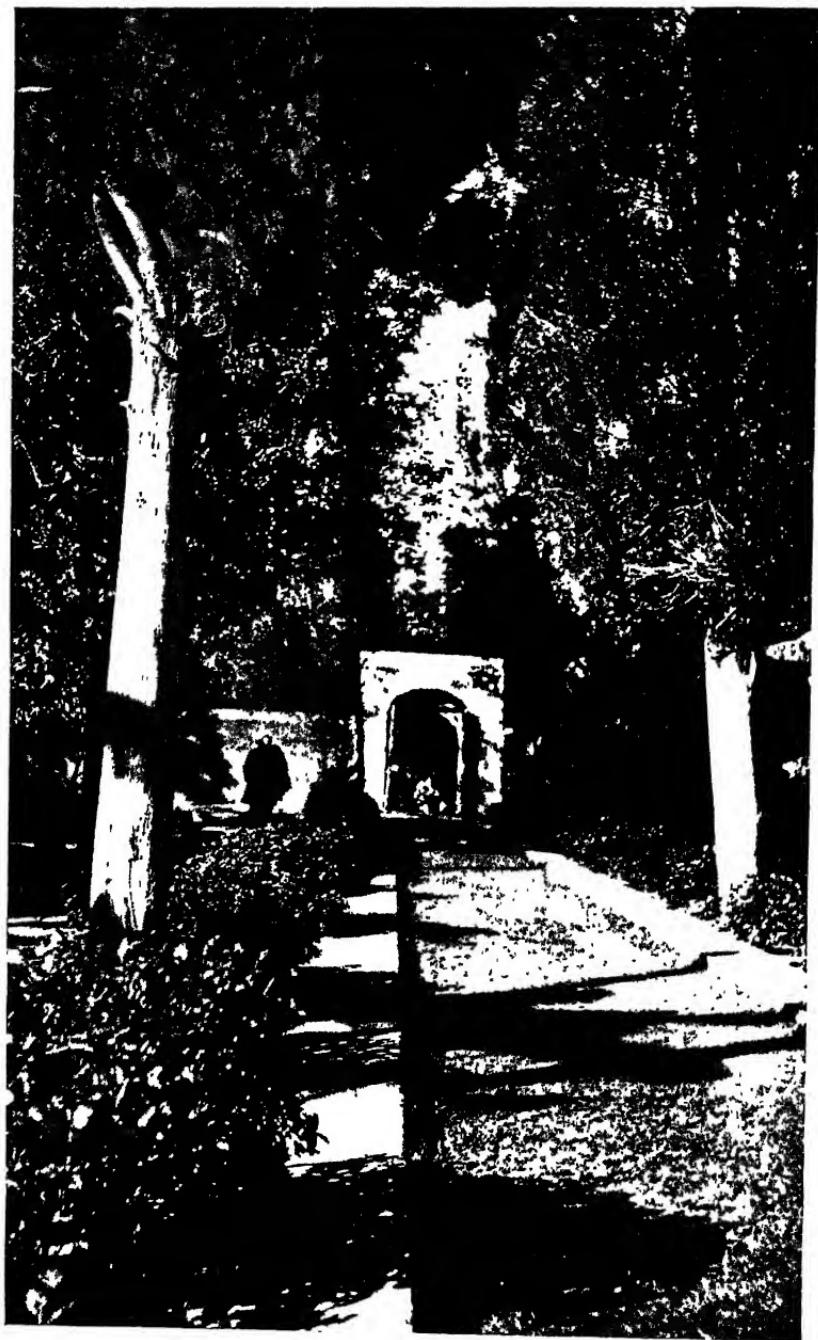
The art of the Byzantine Empire, growing more and more decorative in character under the spell of the Hellenized East, turned away from the Grecian love of form, and the Roman sense of fact, to find a fresh stimulus and inspiration in the Oriental love of nature and imaginative symbolism. Elaborate pattern opposed itself to realistic forms, and plants, birds, and animals formed the base of entwined scroll-work and geometrical designs. The splendid pottery and tiles, the goldsmith's art, the chasing of weapons, the lacquer work, enamelling and embroideries, witness in a hundred ways to this delicate and all-pervading taste.

It was reserved for the Arabs, and more particularly the Shiah Moslems of Persia, to develop this love of plants and flowers until, owing partly to the conditions of the country, and partly to the religious restrictions of the Koran, which forbids the delineation of human beings, dwelling as they did on the delights of the eightfold Paradise, the garden became the paramount influence throughout Moslem art. The intense appreciation of this special craft was no doubt fostered in Arabia by the difficulties of its practice. Costly and elaborate irrigation was the only means of obtaining the result desired. Little wonder then that after long days of journeying over the shadeless burning sands, the first glimpse of the green fountain-sprinkled garden seemed heaven itself.

The Yemenite Arabs who invaded the Peninsula in the eighth century after their conquest of Egypt, unlike other nomad Arab tribes, had developed a remarkable civilization and art at their capital of Sanä. The naive traditional birds and beasts painted on the pottery of Triana, and the curious Indo-Persian character of the designs which still persist in the lace-work of Seville, show how deep-rooted the effect of this influence has been. But the Spanish Moslem water-



NISHAT BAGH, KASHMIR  
Garden Lay-out : Water Shute and Fountains



NAWASHAHR BAGH. PUNJAB

Garden Planting : Cypress and Double Jasmine by Watercourse (now filled in)

gardens, although few in number and small in comparison with their originals at Sana, Bagdad and Damascus, are even more interesting survivals.

That they survived at all is no doubt owing to the fact that they were royal residences. Few others are left. For the



Aljibe, Moorish Reservoir above Granada.

secret of the old Moorish prosperity which had lain in the Arab care for agriculture, in the Moslem love of gardening, was lost on the Christian conquerors. Under the Omeyyads the city of Cordova measured twenty miles across, the greater part of which was taken up by the gardens of the various palaces and mosques. The Arab historians compare Granada to "a goblet full of emeralds," and considered its surroundings finer in extent and productiveness, than the celebrated "Meadow of Damascus." Various works on agriculture written at the time dealt at length with horticulture, garden building and the science of botany in connection with that of

medicine, as well as with the treatment of the land. Intermixed with curious fables and much quaint advice they recorded valuable scientific discoveries, and gave many useful details. But the Christians in the Peninsula after the fourteenth century seemed to have had a profound contempt for everything that did not emanate from Rome; at all events, they never grasped the importance of the land, or understood the necessity of keeping up the wonderful Arab system of irrigation they had inherited. By means of great subterranean reservoirs called *aljibes*, and a network of *cañerias* or small canals, large districts originally unproductive on account of their arid nature had been supplied with a constant flow of water. But once the reservoirs were neglected and the canals allowed to block up, the whole country suffered in spite of its rich soil, and its wealth declined. It was no small misfortune for Spain that the Catholic kings, who admired the architecture of the Moors, despised and feared their literature and learning. They might at least have spared their treatises on irrigation and agriculture, instead of allowing Cardinal Ximenes to burn them, in a public square at Granada, with all the other Arabic books that he could collect.

But if agriculture suffered, in the garden the Moorish influence was not easily repressed. In Andalucia it has continued almost unbroken to this day. Further north at Aranjuez, it has proved stronger than Italian Renaissance feeling. And beyond the Guadarramas, at Bourbon La Granja itself, built by the niece of Louis XIV, in direct imitation of Versailles, the older influences of the country reassert themselves.

## Chapter II

### THE MECCA OF THE WEST

“ He that hath two cakes of bread, let him sell one of them for some flowers of the Narcissus, for bread is food for the body, but Narcissus is food for the soul.”

*Mahomet.*

**C**OLONIA PATRICIA, as the Romans called Cordova, is perhaps the best starting point for a study of garden-craft in Spain. Incidentally it is one of the most fascinating old towns. For nowhere else in the Peninsula have Roman and Arab influences taken deeper root.

The splendid public buildings, the temples, forums, bridges and aqueducts, typical of Latin civilization, are not to be found here. They have all disappeared. Roman influence at Cordova is of a more homely and domestic kind. Threading the maze of narrow streets that stretches along the left bank of the Guadalquivir, between low, two-storied houses with brown tiled roofs and blank expressionless walls, lured on by glimpses through the doorways of gay open patios where a fountain plays in the central cistern and painted columns support a double arcade, one might be wandering down the stone-paved vias, and gazing into the flower-filled atriums of a reconstructed Pompeii.

The Arab hold on Cordova, on the other hand, is striking and spectacular. The fascination of the Great Mosque, which made the place the Mecca of the West, a centre of Moslem culture frequented by students from all parts of the world, enthralled its Christian conquerors. It overawed even St. Ferdinand's pious vandalism, and succeeded in preserving

this, the grandest monument that Moslem art has left on European soil. It was many centuries before the Cathedral Chapter, in the face of the opposition of the town, managed to secure a permission from Charles V to erect the large Renaissance choir. In itself, the choir is a masterpiece of Plateresque architecture, but the Emperor's remark when he saw it in 1526, is worth repeating: " You have built what you or others might have built anywhere, but you have destroyed something which was unique in the world."

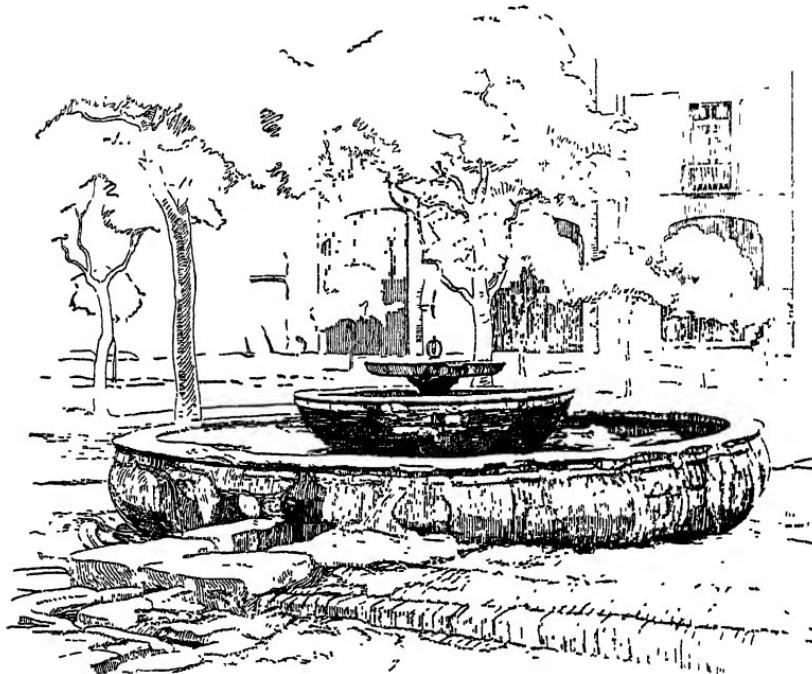
The first Omeyyad Emir, 'Abd-er-Raham I, was noted for his love of flowers. After his conquest of Cordova one of his chief concerns was the building of a garden which should recall the palace of his grandfather, Khalif Hisham at Damascus, where he had been brought up as a child. All kinds of rare and exotic trees and flowers were introduced from foreign lands. The Emir's agents were despatched to Syria, even as far as Turkestan and India, to bring him strange new plants and seeds. Among these the date palm, and the pomegranate, now the emblem of Granada, became naturalized in Spain at this time. The two succeeding Emirs, Hisham and Hakam kept up this taste. Under the rule of 'Abd-er-Raham II, son and successor of Hakam, the court at Cordova became renowned for its brilliant luxury. The new Sultan surrounded himself with a numerous and talented retinue; he adorned his capital with costly works, constructing bridges, palaces and mosques; and showed his skill in devising and laying out spacious and beautiful gardens through which canals conducted water from the mountain streams. Zirab the famous musician, a special favourite of the Sultan, brought the culture of Bagdad to the banks of the Guadalquivir. At the Spanish court the word of this exquisite was law. What remained of civilization from the days of the Romans was exchanged for the customs of the Eastern Khalifat. The gold and silver vessels of former times were replaced by frail

and beautifully shaped glass goblets, and coloured leather took the place of the white table napery on which they had stood. Even the different garments suitable to the changing seasons were defined, and Zirab's name as an artist and arbitrator of taste was linked with those of the illustrious men of science, architects, poets, soldiers, ministers and princes, and held in respect to the very end of the Moslem dominion in Spain.

In the time of 'Abd-er-Raham III (912-961), Arab splendour at Cordova reached its zenith. It was he who built the celebrated palace and suburb of Az-Zahra high up on the slopes of the Sierra Morena. Architects from the Eastern Empire are said to have made the garden plans. Byzantine workmen built the central pavilion with its mosaics of glass and its fountain basin filled with quicksilver that dazzled the Kings of Leon and Navarre when they came to seek an audience, and even impressed the Emperor's ambassadors fresh from Constantinople. The wonderful mosaics of the third Mirab in the Mosque, with their entwined scrolls and flowers designed and carried out by Byzantine workmen sent over by the Christian Emperor to 'Abd-er-Raham's successor, still exist in their glittering richness and beauty to show what the taste of that day could achieve.

The other cities of the Western Khalifat were no less remarkable than Cordova for their surrounding gardens. Toledo, the old capital of the Visigoths, had a notable Arab palace. In the centre of the lake rose a water pavilion of stained glass adorned with gold. Here the Sultan could recline in comfort on the hottest day, encircled by the glistening shower falling from the dome. At night tapers were lighted to glow through the transparent walls. This pavilion recalls an Indian example in an old garden belonging to the Maharajah of Alwar, where a white marble pavilion is completely enclosed in a veil of spray falling from the cornice.

There is a curious Indian suggestion, too, in the early Visigothic tradition, which taught that no flowers should be plucked that had not been bedewed by the waters of baptism. To this day in Hindu India, no sweet-scented



Arab Fountain, Cathedral Patio, Seville

flowers are gathered from the garden to string in wreaths or to decorate the rooms without a previous offering of some blossoms to the gods of the household shrine.

From the intricate story of Western Islam, confused by the fierce intertribal feuds transferred from the deserts of Arabia to the valleys of Southern Spain, the figure of Mu'tamid of Seville stands out as the last of the Poet Princes, the last Spanish-born king who worthily represented Arab culture and nationality. Born in 1040, Mu'tamid, like his predecessors at Cordova, was passionately fond of flowers

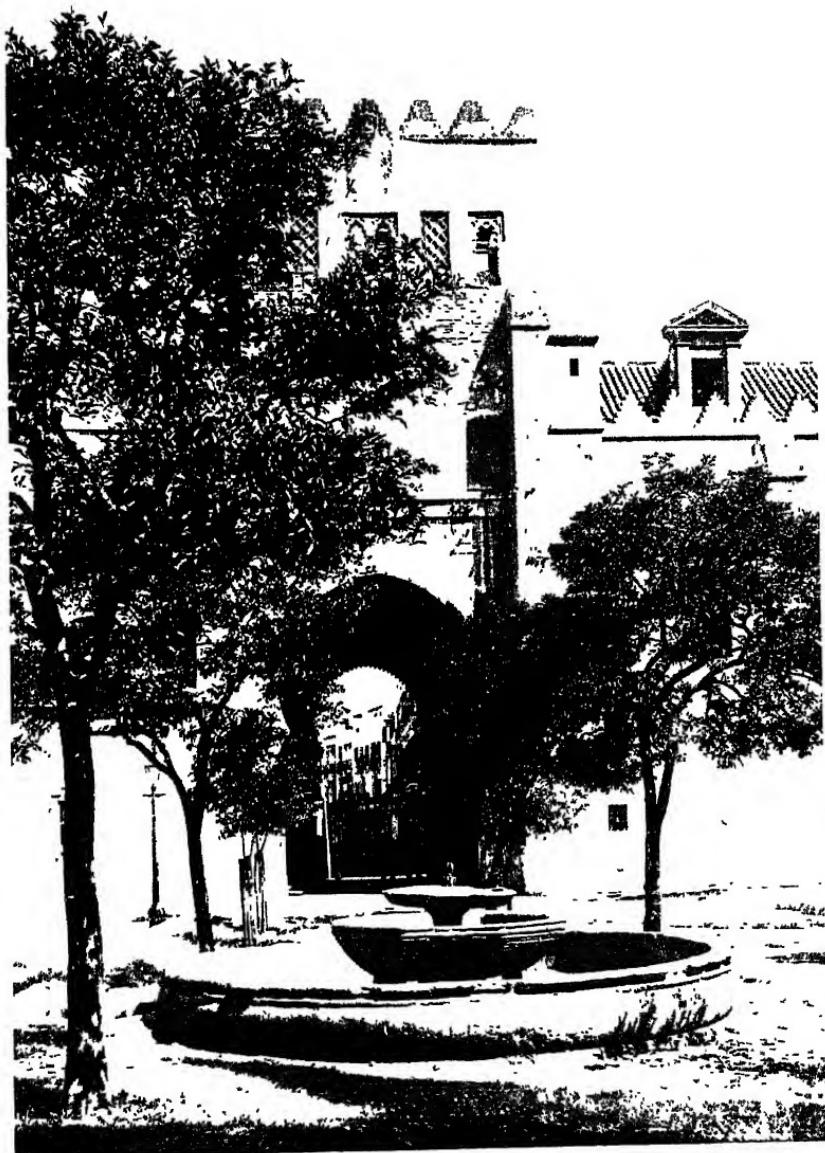
and gardens. Once when his wife, Rumaykiyya, who was also noted for her wit and skill in verse, was watching from the palace archways the rare spectacle of falling snow, she burst into tears. Mu'tamid, she declared, must provide this lovely sight each winter or take her to a land where the snow-flakes ever fall. The Khalif promised to grant her wish: "Thou shalt have snow each winter even here; such is my word." He promptly ordered the Sierra of Cordova to be planted with almond trees; so that after the frosts of winter passed away, the bare brown hills were clothed for Rumaykiyya's delight in delicate pink snow.

The Quinta of Arrizafa, a short distance from the present city of Cordova, stands on the site of the garden palace built by 'Abd-er-Raham I. It was called the Rizzafa, and a Spanish romance entitled "*Arrizafa*" is based on the legend of its early days. It now belongs to the family of Don Carlos Montijano Barón, who resides there. The enclosure is on an immense scale, but the original pavilions have gone, and most of the terraces have lost their masonry; an orange orchard now covers the greater part of the sloping ground. A feature of the Quinta is its large aviary of pheasants and fighting-cocks, which perpetuates an old tradition, for no Eastern garden was complete without the gaiety of birds; the two Geese of Happiness were essential to a well-conducted paradise. A detail of later origin on one of the upper terraces is the clipped box parterre representing the arms of United Spain. At the top of the garden there still remains a delightful arched gateway, with a platform above on which to sit and contemplate the view, after the Moslem style. And sitting there one can enjoy, as no doubt 'Abd-er-Raham did, the beauty of the blossoming foreground, and the far view extending across the valley of the Guadalquivir, and over the whole plain of Andalucia away to the Sierra Nevada behind Granada that

bound the south-west horizon. A fine prospect is one of the first requirements of the Moslem garden builder. All over the Near East, in its cities of mixed communities, it is noticeable that the Moslem quarter is always the upper town.

The great gardens like the Arrizafa which surrounded Arab Cordova, fifty thousand in number, if we can trust the Moslem chronicler Al-Makkari, have gone, ruined by the breakdown of the irrigation on which their life depended. But within the present boundaries of the city there are two very interesting old examples. The most perfect, the Patio de los Narjos, as the courtyard of the Mosque is called, is the oldest existing garden in Europe, being laid out by the great chamberlain, Al-Mansur, about 976. It was he who completed the last seven aisles of the Mosque, and from the plan it will be seen that the garden space is laid out and planted to correspond with this final extension. Each row of orange-trees leads up to one of the nineteen arched openings of the Mosque, so that when there were no dividing walls blocking the archways, the avenues of trees formed a continuation of the rows of columns in the interior—a practical illustration of the interweaving of building and planting that forms the leading feature of Moslem garden-craft. The courtyard is four hundred feet long, by two hundred wide, and its orange trees are divided into three plots, each with a fountain in the centre, the customary palm tree marking the corners of the design. Water from the fountains fills the little stone-edged irrigation channels that run from tree to tree. It is this need for irrigation that has kept the traditional plan intact; two picturesque fountains of a much later period are the only additions that break the symmetry of the original scheme.

The Alcázar at Cordova, a bird's-eye view of which can be seen in "Les Délices de l'Espagne," is no longer a royal residence such as the better-known Alcázar at Seville. It is



SEVILLE  
Arab Fountain, Cathedral Patio



SEVILLE  
Brick Irrigation Channels, Cathedral Patio.

now converted into a prison and a military hospital, and its former gardens, cut off from their buildings, are in private hands. But the huerta (orchard) of the Alcázar—what is left of it—is a remarkable fragment of a garden on the old Arab



plan. The modern entrance, divided only by rails from the neighbouring square, is unimpressive, but below the first patio is a characteristic paved terrace almost filled by two large ornamental tanks. These tanks supply the water for the fountains and irrigation channels of the rest of the enclosure which at one time extended in a succession of terraces down to the river wall. A series of fountains placed on the old lines down the centre of the gardens decorate the

remaining terraces, but the fountain basins are raised, showing they were altered at a later date. The planting is much as it always was, and through the tangle of pomegranate and fig trees are fine views of the Castle towers, the Torre de Paloma and the Torre del Diablo. Unfortunately the cypress avenues are gone, but in compensation one very interesting feature is left in the numerous little "glorietas," the arbours of rose and jasmine that shade each crossing of the side paths.

This word "glorieta" meets one at every turn in the Spanish garden. No pleasure-ground is too large to disdain the intimate touch of what a Spanish friend translated for my benefit as a "tiny paradise," a "private glory"; adding that the Gloria denoted Heaven, and both were round in shape. No garden is too small to be without its glorieta. And with the reserved character, the seclusion which is the particular note of the Spanish garden, the interest naturally centres round these arbours that are a refuge from the sun by day, and the dining-place of the family on hot summer nights. Bay trees are often used for this purpose, interwoven and trained to a great height. In one of the oldest Moorish gardens at Granada, I was shown a glorieta recently cut out of a thicket of bamboos, of which the owner was very proud. Sometimes in the larger gardens the glorieta takes a more permanent form; a masonry pavilion may replace the creepers and climbing roses, or a circle of huge cypresses throw a dark impenetrable shade over elaborate stone benches grouped round a table.

In spite of the explanation given me, I was not quite satisfied about the origin of this word until I saw the Huerta del Alcázar. There I found a connecting link. For there were the glorietas—not one or two of them at most, but one after the other at every crossing of the side paths, corresponding exactly to the eight pearl pavilions of the true believer's



CORDOVA  
Patio de Los Naranjos  
“The Customary Palm-Tree Marking the Corners of the Design”



CORDOVA  
Fountain in the Huerta of the Alcázar

vision—the Pearl Pavilions where eight lovely Houris await their master in the Moslem Paradise. The famous garden carpet made for Shah Abbas, the Persian sovereign, shows this identical design with the fountains down the centre and the eight pavilions, four on either side. The word “glorieta,” tracked down on earth, had been correctly traced to heaven after all.

### Chapter III

## GRANADA: IN THE ALHAMBRA

“ There was crying in Granada when the sun was going down.  
Some calling on the Trinity, some calling on Mahoun.  
Here passed away the Koran—there in the Cross was borne,  
And here was heard the Christian bell and there the Moorish horn.”  
*Lockhart.*

THE fairy gardens of Cordova have vanished like a dream. The Az-Zahra, with its fountain of quicksilver too dazzling for the eyes to bear, where Rumaykiyya turned instead to watch the almond-petals fall, might be just a fancy told to rouse the sleepy Sultan by the tireless lady of the Arabian Nights. Only at Granada, among the fountain courts of the Alhambra, and in the shadow of the huge cypresses at the Generalife, the Moorish past is practically unchanged, and from these backgrounds Scheharazade’s tales take on a new reality.

The petty state of Granada survived the break-up of the Moslem Empire in the West by two hundred and fifty years. Securely entrenched in a rich valley encircled by high mountains, the Moors defied all the efforts of the Christian knights, much as the Hindu kingdom of Kashmir, defended by the snowy ramparts of the Pir Panjal, for a long period defied the all-conquering Moslems of India.

Entering the Vega of Granada from the west, the parallel between the two valleys is most striking. There is the same rocky defile at La Peña, the rock from which the lovers, Laila and Manuel, the Moorish maiden and the Spanish knight, unable to escape from their pursuers, threw them-

PLATE X



AZUL IRIS IN THE ALHAMBRA



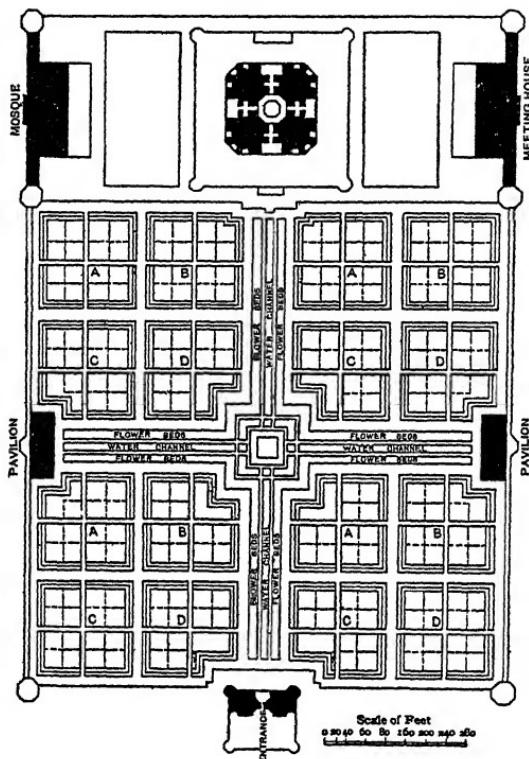
selves locked in each other's arms. At Loja, known as one of the two keys of Granada, the valley opens out just as the Kashmir valley opens out at Baramulla. From there on, the road follows the winding of the river Genil through rich irrigated country, much as the poplar-shadowed Kashmir road on its way to Srinagar runs through the rice-fields of the Jhelum. There are no lakes in the Granada valley, and the snow mountains (the Sierra Nevada) though not unlike the Pir Panjal in shape, are placed rather differently; instead of lining the south side of the valley, they close the eastern end. But the situation of the two capitals is similar, and the climate, vegetation, and general aspect of the Vega, irresistibly remind those who know both valleys, of the old traveller Bernier's *Paradise of the Indies*. Even the Alhambra, which Al-Almar commenced to build in 1248, is set on high, dominating city and plain like Akbar's Kashmir castle of Hari Parbat.

The Moorish palace of the Alhambra, "Palais que les Genies ont doré comme un rêve et rempli d'harmonies," as some would have it, this example of over-decorated architecture lacking structural qualities, as it appears to others, suffers like all Oriental architecture when judged by Europeans. They see and judge it in ignorance, apart from its life and practical purposes. This Moorish fortress-palace left on Southern Spanish soil, like some beautiful and curious shell stranded by a far-receding tide, is no exception to the rule. It is usually over-praised or under-rated.

It could be wished that architecture were more studied, and studied in relation to life, rather than to historical and archæological detail. Then it would be realized that the better a building suits its purpose, as the shell suits its snail, the better and more beautiful its construction will be; for the climate and requirements of the people who use the building are the governing factors of fine architecture.

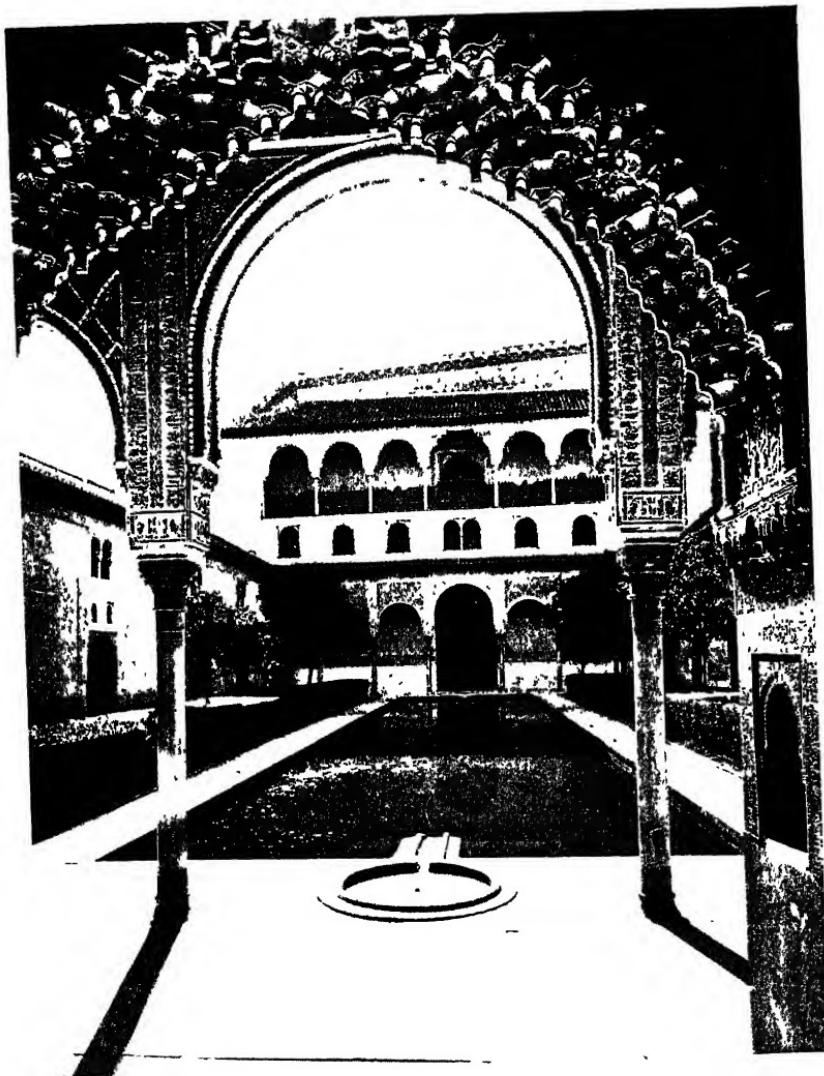
## S P A N I S H G A R D E N S

Mohammedan art in Spain drew its inspiration, as we have seen, largely from Persia, by way of Bagdad and Damascus. To the medieval Persian craftsman colour always meant more than form. The scattered buildings of

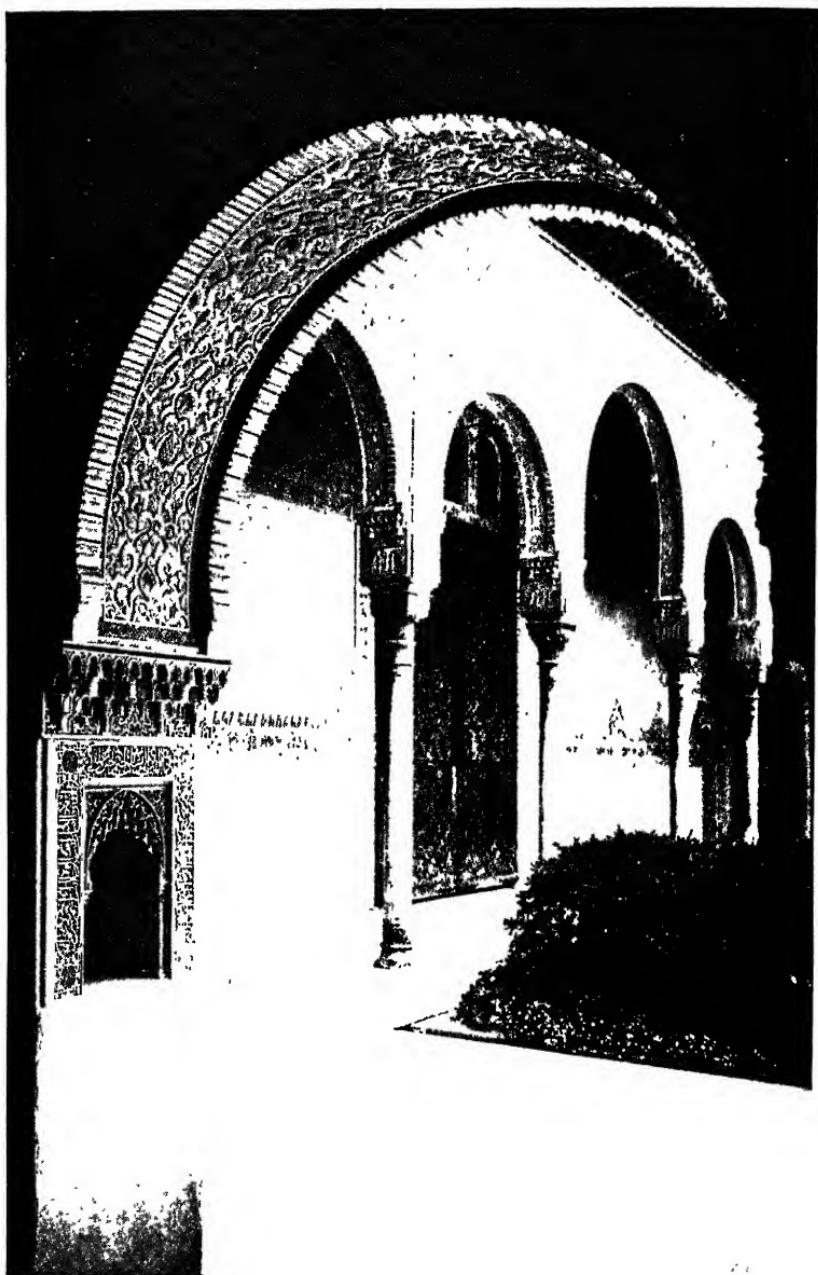


Plan of Taj Mahal Garden  
(From a drawing by Colonel Hodgson)

the Alhambra, with their cream plaster walls, gay tiled roofs, and painted stucco complications—charming in themselves—cannot compare, for the most part, with the clean-cut sandstone blocks, the splendid domes and delicate marble carvings of the more architectonic Moslem palaces in India. But the Moorish garden-palaces show the same genius for colour arrangement in contrast or harmony, and the same decorative and practical use of water in their plan. As in

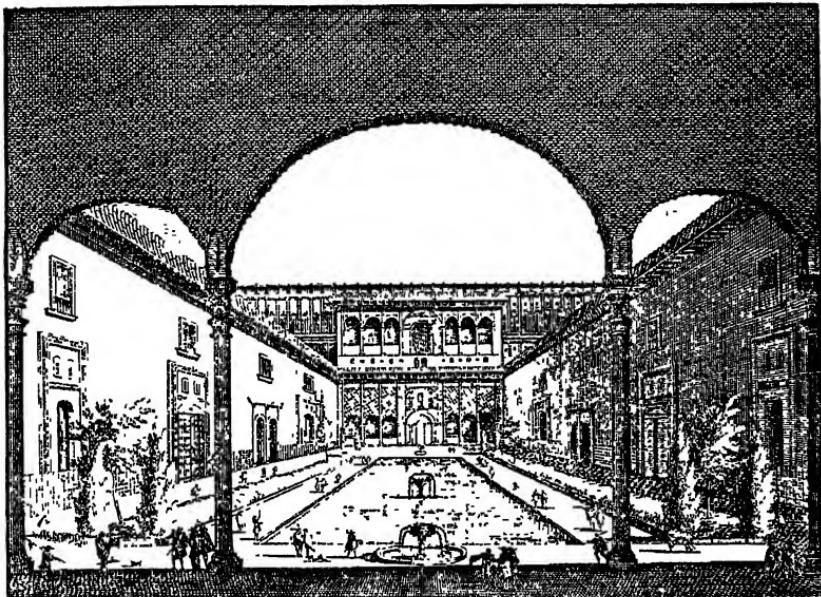


THE ALHAMBRA  
Court of the Myrtles



THE ALHAMBRA  
The Flower Niche—Court of the Myrtles

India, so in Spain, house and garden, for all intents and purposes, are one, the water being the central motive in the design—the string on which the beads are strung. Brimming the edges of its stone channels, gliding smoothly under dark arches like some long mirror let into the floor, or gushing up



The Court of the Pool

in unexpected little fountains, it runs through palace courts and chambers connecting banqueting-room and cloister, rose-garden and audience-hall, binding them into one architectural whole.

Four garden courts are left in the Alhambra as it stands to-day. Of these, that with the characteristic Moorish name of the Pool, the Patio de la Alberca, called by the Spanish the Patio de los Arraynes, from its myrtle hedges, is the finest and most important, being one hundred and twenty feet long by seventy-five feet broad. This was the principle court of the palace, and court of ablutions for all who were

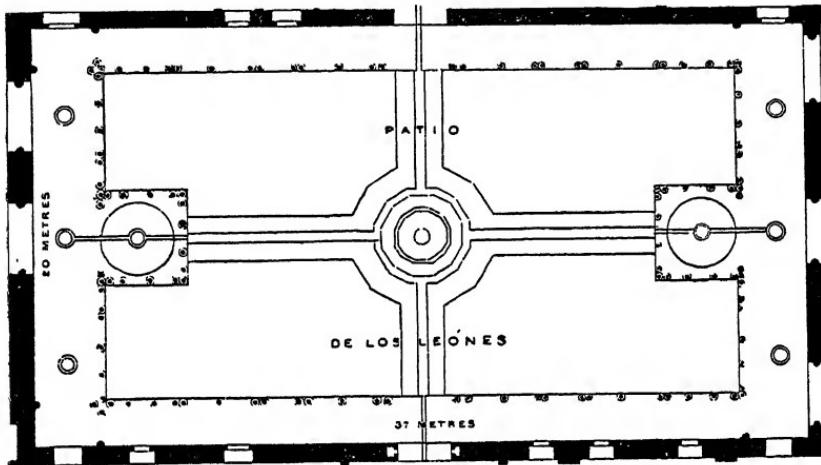
present at the state ceremonial of the "zahà," held in the private mosque near by. The change in the name of this patio is significant. For the Court of the Pool, now the Court of the Myrtle Hedges, calls attention to the fact that with the change of royal owners its former ceremonial use was banned.

The clipped hedges or wrought iron railings, called verjas, surrounding tanks and pools are a marked feature of Spanish garden design. The occasional stone balustrades of Italian Renaissance fountains have quite a different character. From an æsthetic point of view these railings are often disfiguring, for they shut off the reflections on which more than half the charm of water used on a small scale depends. But in Spain such barriers were not merely added for ornament: the verjas had a practical side, if a grim one. At one time proof of ceremonial ablutions was the only evidence needed to condemn a prisoner of the Spanish Inquisition; if this damning fact could be established, nothing further was required. So it will be seen that ablutions of any sort fell rather into disfavour, and even the garden tanks were felt to be safer and more orthodox well railed round.

The Court of the Myrtles is approached after the usual Moorish fashion, by twists and turns through narrow passages in the thickness of the walls: an entrance suggestive of a northern fortress and quite unlike the splendid porticos of the East. But in its own way, perhaps, the obscure winding entrance heightens the effect of the open sunlit court.

There is something here of the charm that lingers in the old Mughal palaces of Delhi and Agra, a subtle harmony, a sense of completeness which is missing elsewhere in the Alhambra. A warm amber glow pervades the walls and cream marble pavements; it lights up the graceful colonnades at each end of the enclosure with their dados of rich iridescent tiles and shallow marble basins where a fountain bubbles up and

escapes down a little channel into the tank. Below in the clean green water the goldfish dart in and out among the dark reflections of the hedges, and a solitary orange tree, relic of a former scheme of planting, leans over the pool, rivalling the goldfish with its ripe glistening fruit. High above the north end the rugged Torre de Comares, one of the twenty-three towers of the Alhambra, sharply outlined against a



Plan of the Court of Lions

deep blue sky, brings out with the added force of contrast the delicate beauty of the patio it overlooks and guards.

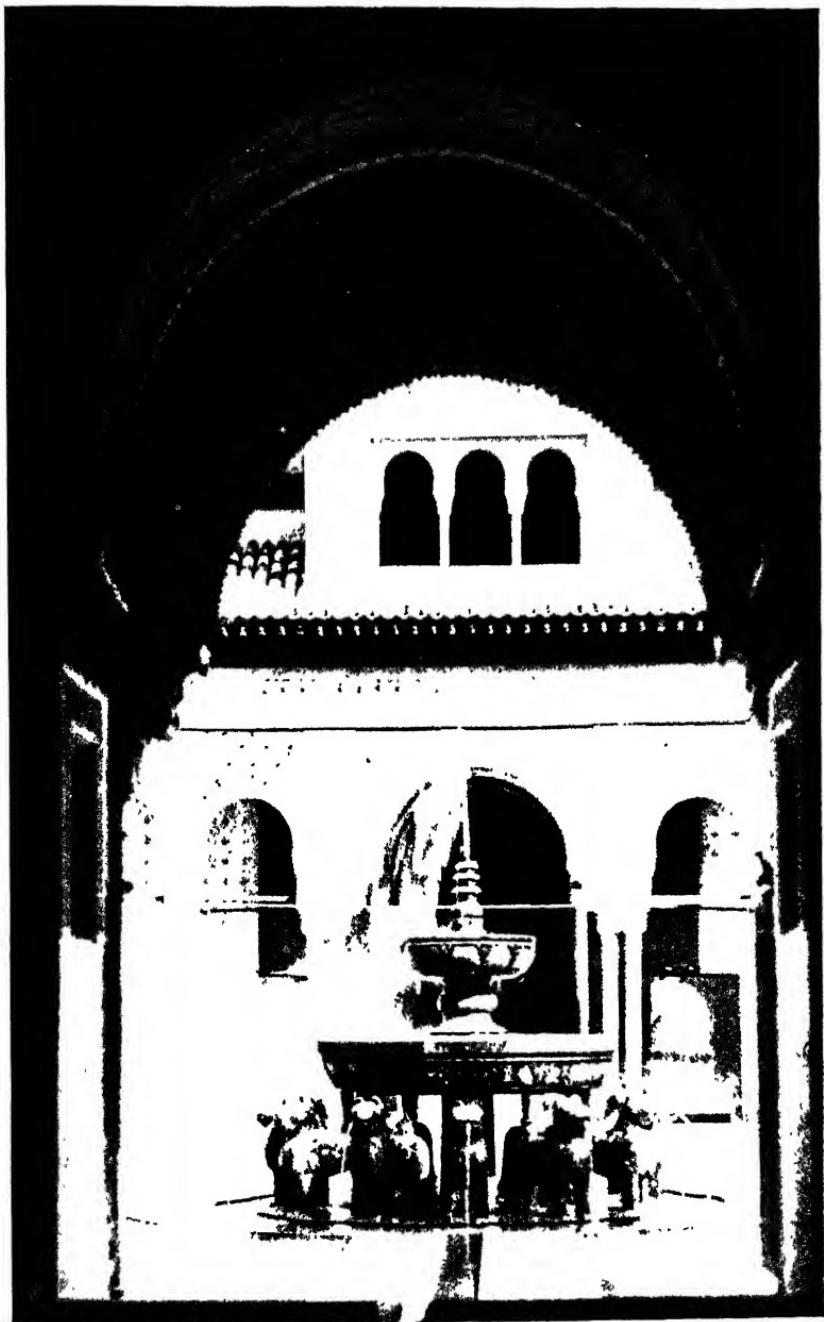
The Court of the Lions—Patio de los Leones—called after the twelve heraldic looking beasts that bear the central fountain basin on their backs, was begun in 1377 by Mohammed V. It is ninety-two feet long by fifty-two feet wide, but it seems at first sight smaller than this from its hundred and twenty-four slender alabaster columns which support the arcades and two airy pavilions projecting into the enclosure. These pavilions have domes of Moorish carpentry in the form known as *media naranja*—half-orange. Orange trees once studded the four garden plots into which the open space is divided by four tiny canals that run into

the centre from fountains under the buildings on each side. When Philip le Beau visited the Alhambra in 1502, six of these orange trees were left. Now the garden space is gravelled over and much of the patio's charm is lost.

The inner palace garden, which formed part of the harîm, is known as the Patio de Daraxa, dar'Aisha, or house of Aisha. The beautiful fountain in the centre—familiar from Sargent's water-colours—was brought from the Mexuar Patio by order of Charles V, and mounted on a Renaissance pedestal. When the water is turned on, the light playing on the under side of the great Moorish basin, scored and faceted so that a thousand little diamond points may be reflected and magnified in the dancing pool below, is one of the most fascinating sights in the Alhambra. The planting of the garden follows traditional lines, although in this case the paths bordered by high-clipped box are not raised. The old orange trees, set close in to the edge of the colonnades so that their trunks appear to be alternate pillars while their leaves curtain the openings, and the tall cypresses, their dark spires forming a circle round the white waving plume of the fountain, are two typical features of a style in which building and planting were more closely interlaced than in any other.

An archway leads directly into the fourth garden court, the Patio de los Cipreses, or Patio de la Reja; this last from the wooden spindle gates and grilles over the windows which in gardens and the poorer churches often replace the forged iron rejas. The patio, built in 1654, is a very modest affair. But with its patterned cobble pavement, its fountain guarded by four huge cypress trees rising from cut stone bases, and its open promenade gallery overlooking the Albaicin Hill on one side and the garden on the other, it has a charm, this little patio, that many a larger garden might envy.

Outside the entrance to the Arab Palace, and again beyond



THE ALHAMBRA  
The Lions Fountain—Court of Lions



THE ALHAMBRA  
Court of Daraxa

the Patio de Daraxa, two other old parterres have been unearthed, and quite a big garden has been partly restored near the Mesquita, the tiny gem of a mosque perched on the ramparts which dates from the time of Yusuf I. From the Mesquita to the Torre de las Damas is only a short walk, and leads one on along the walls from tower to tower into what is now known as the Alta Alhambra, or Secano, i.e. the dry unirrigated ground. There, if it should happen to be early in the month of April, the iris will all be out, forming a lovely sight, with their grey-green leaves and transparent purple petals shining against the blue and silver background of the snows.

It has been said that Spanish gardens are curiously lacking in the colour of flowers; that green is their predominating note. Green is certainly a favourite Spanish colour, and this is not to be wondered at in the brown arid country of the central plateau, where the parterres of Aranjuez and the Escorial are filled with endless geometric complications of clipped box. But the Moors of Andalucia, much as they valued green for their turbans—a sign of descent from the Prophet—had other ideas for their gardens. The deep purple blue of the iris, azul, was the colour of Moslem Spain. Window shutters, and garden doors, flower-pots and wooden grilles, were more frequently painted azure than any other shade. But the iris motif is most striking in the tiles, the typical Moorish tiles called azulejos; azure and sage green, turquoise and white, their cool delicious colour scheme can still be seen each April in the Secano when the irises are in bloom.

These favourite flowers which were planted in massed squares or used in thick ruches to border the orchard paths, were invariably planted in Moslem graveyards; Gul-i-Mazar, flower of graves, is their Urdu name. In Turkish cemeteries, where everlasting flowers mark the last resting-place of a

Soldier of the Faith whose Heaven is assured, and a lily in any form shows the tomb to be a woman's, the white iris, as the special token of innocence and purity, denotes the grave of a young girl.

The burying-place of the kings of Granada is now the Alameda of the Alhambra, and the iris are overgrown by tall trees; elm trees planted there by the Duke of Wellington, who did his best no doubt in difficult circumstances to reproduce what he most admired at home—an English landscape park. But the elm avenues and their fountains have fortunately preserved the form of an earlier day, when Charles V constructed the great wall fountain with its three spouts typifying the three rivers of Granada—the Darro, the Genil, and the Churra. The garden on the ramparts above is another charming fragment of this emperor's work. It is called the Jarden de los Adarves (flat wall-tops), and is entered through a small door on the left of the Puerta de la Alcazaba. In the citadel itself, the Torre de la Vela contains the huge bell which is still rung at intervals during the night to regulate the opening and shutting of the irrigation channels in the Vega.

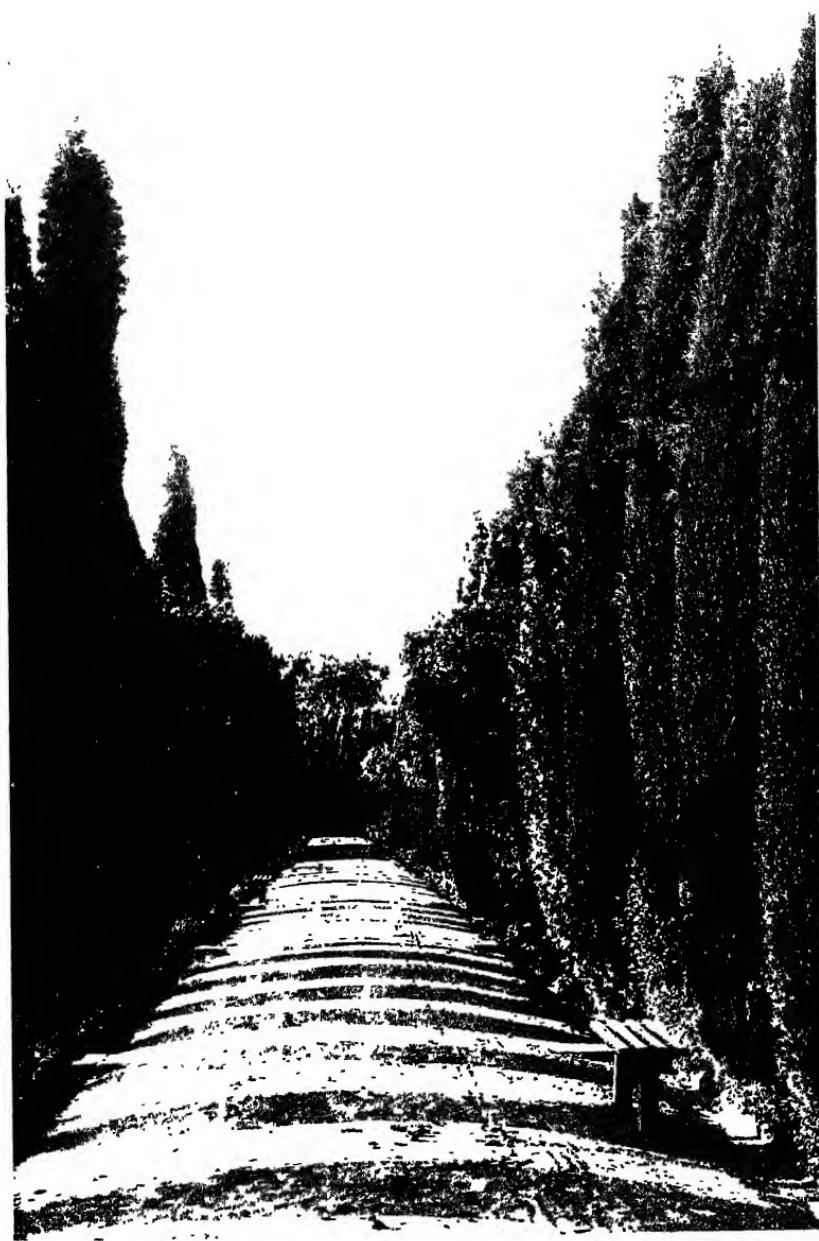
What gardens might have surrounded Charles V's Renaissance palace in the Alhambra, how its magnificent circular patio was to have been laid out, can only be conjectured, for the main building begun in 1526, from designs of Pedro Machuca, who had been educated in Rome, was never finished. The Castle of La Calahorra, over the mountains near Quadix, built sixteen years before, one of the first and finest Renaissance buildings in Spain, which inspired Charles's palace, has no vestige of a garden, or any sign that there has ever been one on the bare rocks at its feet. But for sheer beauty and grandeur nothing even in the Alhambra can surpass this castle built for the famous Duke Roderick Mendoza and his wife, Maria Fonsek, on the wild north slopes of the Sierra Nevada.



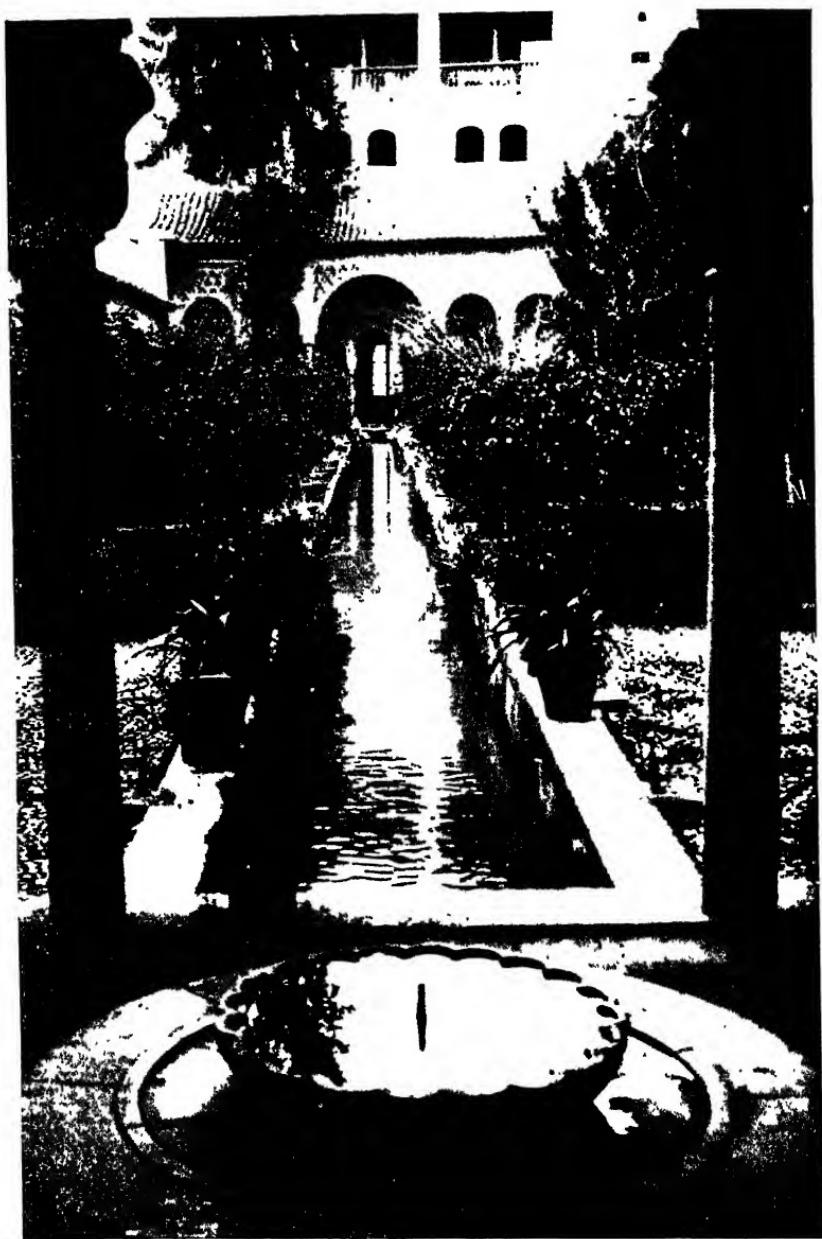
THE ALHAMBRA  
Court of the Four Cypresses



THE ALHAMBRA  
Court of the Four Cypresses from the Gallery Walk



GENERALIFE  
The Cypress Walk



GENERALIFE  
The Lotus Fountain

## Chapter IV

### GRANADA: THE GENERALIFE

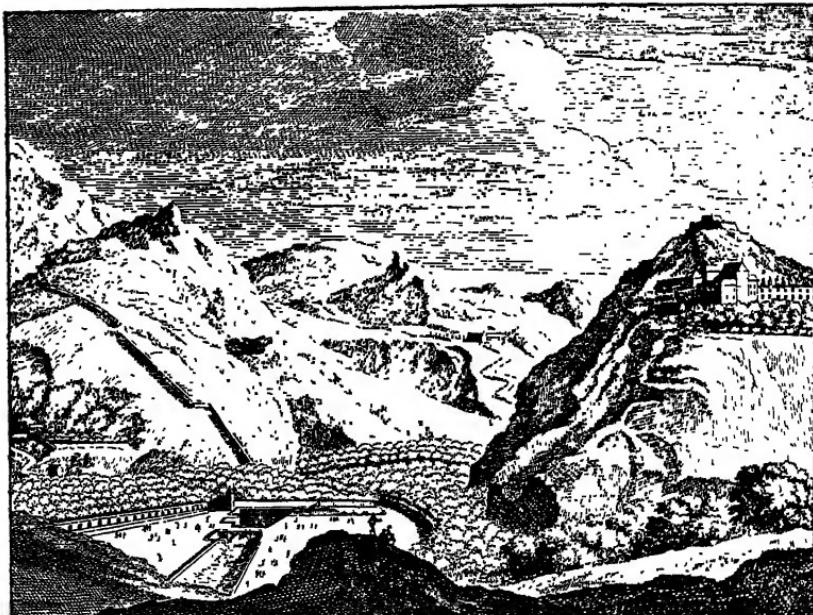
“Roses for perfume,  
Bulbuls for song,  
And the sight and sound  
of running water.”

**S**UCH is the Turkish garden motto: a skilful choice of site goes without saying. A natural spring, a hillside terraced down to meet a river or a lake, mountain crags for a rugged purple background, a distant snow-capped range cutting the sky-line with faint glittering peaks: this is the Oriental garden-planner’s dream. The Generalife, the “Lofty Garden” of the Moorish Sultans on the hill above the Alhambra, carries out in detail this beautiful ideal. No wonder the old Venetian traveller, Navegero, declared the Generalife the most lovely sight he had seen in Spain.

The charm of the place has captivated all who have been there, from the Catholic Kings, Ferdinand and Isabella, who saved the villa by bestowing it on a protégé of theirs (a Moor turned Christian), to the Spanish-Italian family who have held it so long, and only lately parted with it to the Government. Its charm has preserved this thirteenth-century country house almost intact. It was certainly built some time before 1319, for an inscription shows that it was restored in that year by the Sultan Ismael, nephew of the accomplished Al-Nazar, with whom it was a favourite palace. Looking from the Alhambra at its white walls and dark cypress groves set half way down the shoulder of the Cerro del Sol in a frame of bright red earth, dotted with orange and olive

trees, it forms a picture with the sharp precision and delicacy, the gem-like quality of a medieval missal.

The former approach to the Generalife was from below, where a bridge spanned the ravine that divides it from the citadel. Now a fine avenue of cypresses leads out into a road

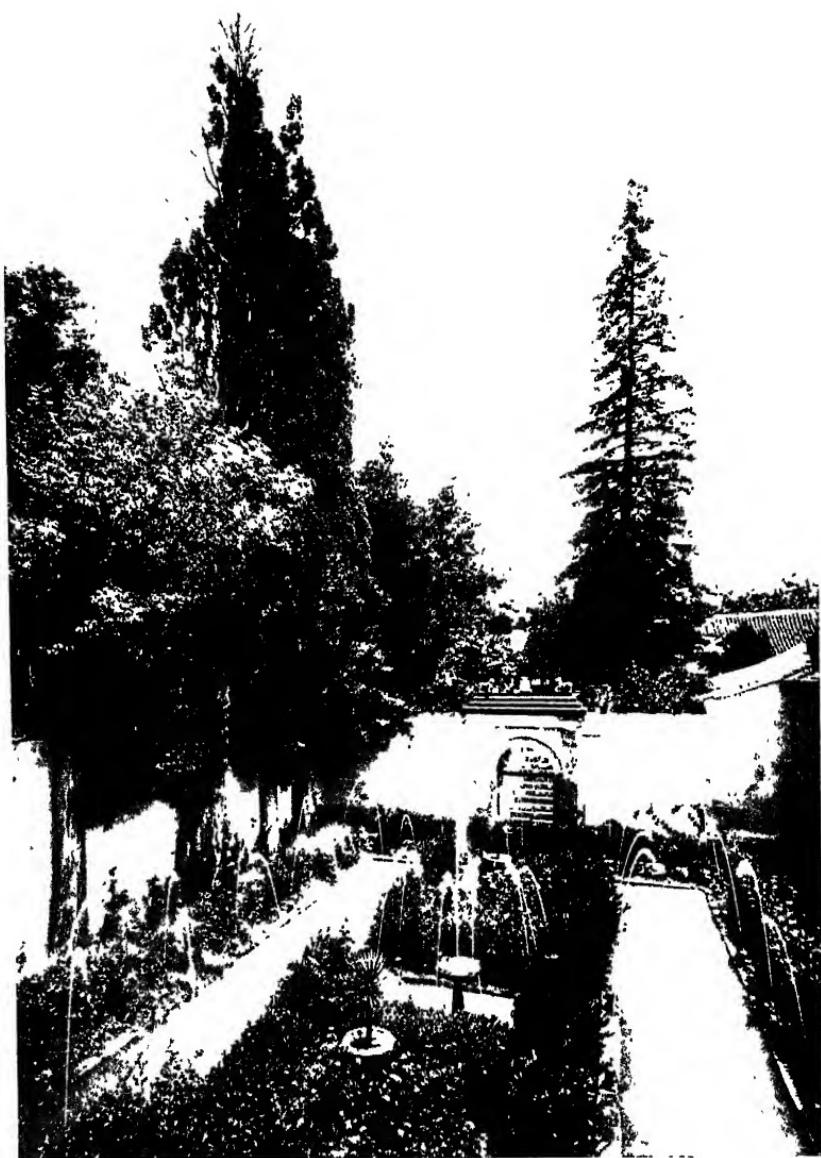


The Generalife, from the Alhambra

higher up the little valley. But following the customary Moorish plan, the actual garden is still entered through the main building. This entrance leads directly into the principal court, a long narrow enclosure with buildings on three sides and on the fourth an arcaded walk. In the centre of this promenade stands a small mosque, now the chapel, and at each end of the patio are particularly graceful colonnades. But the feature of the enclosure is the narrow canal, four feet wide, which runs its entire length. As far as I know it is the only place in Spain where the central canal, the invariable



GENERALIFE  
The Court of the Canal



GENERALIFE  
Patio de los Cipreses—Harim Patio

feature of Moslem gardens on a large scale, is left. The old design of the four-went waterways, old as the four rivers of Paradise, can be better studied in the Court of the Lions, for



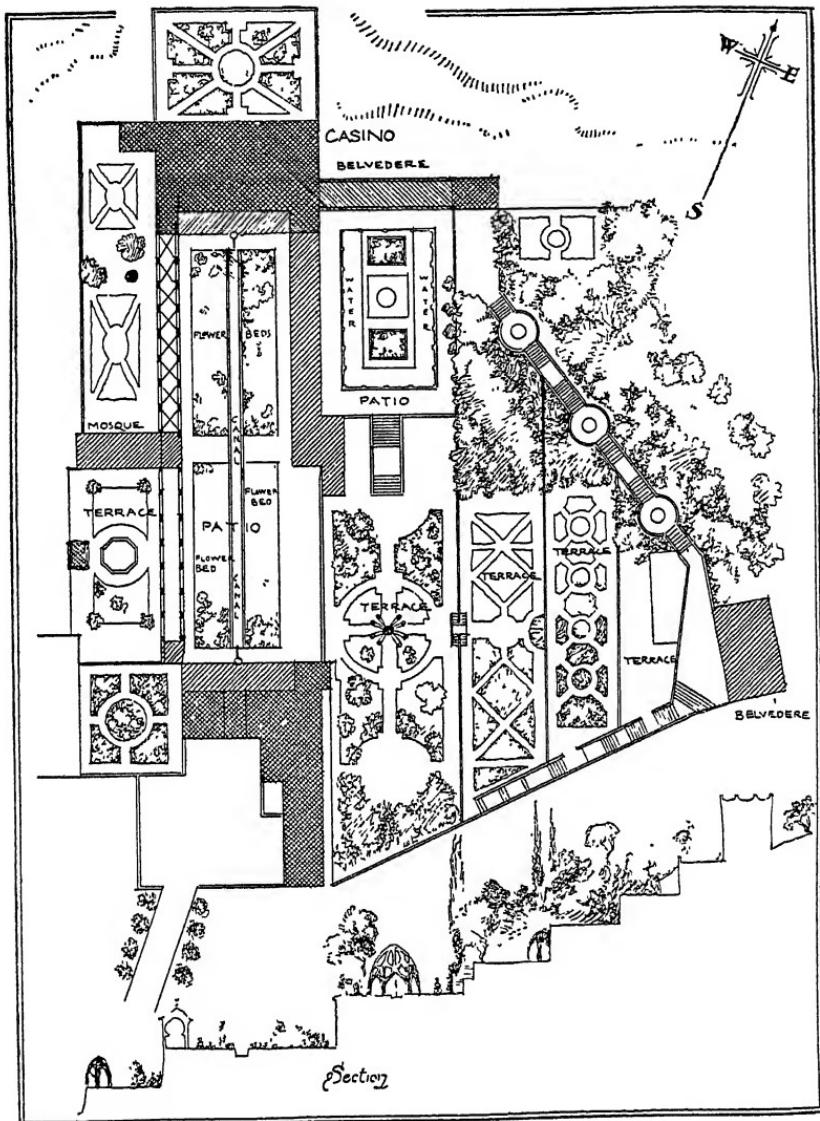
Lotus Fountain, Generalife

at the Generalife, owing to the narrowness of the terraces, the cross canal is omitted. But in the Alhambra patio the canal is only a little runnel in the marble pavement, while the stone-edged canal of the Generalife is quite a substantial affair.

As the need for irrigation first dictated and then crystallized the garden plan, the treatment of the water is all-important. This most ancient type of garden is more strictly a water-garden in the actual meaning of the word than any of its modern successors, with their rivulets and iris-bordered pools. In India the date of a garden can be very fairly gauged by the width of its central canal. Starting as a mere channel in the raised masonry walk—too inconspicuous for decorative effect—the canal gains in width with the passing of the centuries until, by the time the Taj Mahal was built (1650), it is broad enough to reflect in its tranquil waters the full beauty of the buildings at each end. The process goes on. By the late eighteenth century four oblong raised tanks surrounded by broad gravel walks are often all that is left of the four Rivers of Paradise. But this continuity of development broke down in Spain with the breakdown of the Moorish system of irrigation. After the Christian conquest the decorative water-channels disappear. The stream runs tamely under ground, to reappear only where fountains mark the crossing of the brick or pebble-paved walks.

The fountains in the first patio of the Generalife suggest another interesting study. They illustrate the two predominant Oriental types, both based on the lotus. The round shallow basin let into the pavement, sometimes elaborately carved or inlaid, sometimes simply fluted, like the lovely alabaster tazza at the entrance to this court, is taken from the lotus flower in full bloom, with open petals floating on the water. The other type is derived from the stalk and pointed bud of the lotus. These lotus-bud fountains play down the long canals of the Taj, and stud the tanks of the Shalimar gardens in Kashmir and at Lahore, throwing up a light almost invisible spray, keeping the air fresh and cool. In Persia, where these same two types prevail, the little lotus-bud fountains usually play from the bank, instead

GRANADA: THE GENERALIFE



A Plan of the Generalife, Granada

of rising realistically from the water. This Persian treatment is followed at the Generalife where the jets over-arching the main canal form a fascinating avenue of spray. The same style of fountains are met with in the adjoining court called

the Patio de los Cipreses, but there the central basin has been raised and placed on a pedestal at some later date.

It may almost be said that a Spanish garden can be dated by its fountains, in place of its canals; for the later the garden, the higher its principal fountain becomes, until, at La Granja, fountain and fountain-jet rise to the prodigious height of 115 feet. But Spain is a country where generalisations are best left alone; too many cross-currents and conflicting influences meet there. High medieval cisterns were customary in the cloister garths of the Northern provinces long before Christian builders took up the Moorish lotus flowers and placed them on a Renaissance stalk, the better to admire them. And again in Southern Spain, in out-of-the-way places, little lotus fountains were let into the pavement of patios and gardens in the eighteenth century much as they had been three hundred years earlier before the Moors left.

A glance at the old plan of the Generalife will show how complete the villa is, apart from the change of entrance. There is the court of the canal just described, which may be called the main hall of the building, with its arcades at each end for intimate Durbars and receptions, and its mosque with the canal at hand for the purpose of ceremonial ablutions. Below this, on the side towards the Alhambra, is a terrace with fountains encircled by parterres of box. This terrace is divided in two by a pavilion with wall seats formed under the projection of the mosque. On a lower level again, and immediately under the northern pavilion, a large round fountain pool occupies the centre of a small garden about forty feet square. In the wall on the outer edge are five arched window openings each giving a different view of the picturesque Albaicin Hill across the narrow valley of the Darro. In spring, when the gurlanda is in flower, this tiny garden has the prettiest effect. Following a favourite device



GENERALIFE  
Entrance Patio



GENERALIFE  
The Sultana's Mirador

of Spanish gardeners, four bushes of gurlanda are so cut and trained as to form four white fountains, and their long sprays of blossom dancing in the lightest wind are reflected from all sides in the pool.

Both these lower gardens, it will be noticed, are overlooked from the Court of the Canal, and with it make up the men's quarters. The harîm is entered through a door on the right side of the northern building. Here the ladies had their water-court, called after the veteran cypresses, some of which still survive, wedged tightly up against the high retaining wall. The canal in this Patio de los Cipreses is shaped like the letter **U**, and forms a water-parterre embracing two diminutive islands. Formerly it ran through the building at the side, and joined the canal in the main garden. A portico set against a blank wall bounds the north side of the enclosure, and on its upper story an open arcade like that in the Patio de la Reja affords extended views over city and Vega.

The planting in this patio is simplicity itself. It follows the usual Eastern plan of using one, or at most two, flowering plants to each little square or small enclosure—a plan that might be copied sometimes in restless modern gardens, where the effort to please at all times and everywhere at once is apt to defeat its own ends, destroying that unity of effect, the aim of all the arts be they writing, painting, or gardening. To the winter tourists hurried through the Generalife by their guide—for guides, an impatient race, are an obsession in Spain; even Spaniards rarely look at their own national monuments without one—the Patio de los Cipreses is a romantic spot where Queen Zoraya waited for her lover in the shadow of the old gnarled cypress called the Sultana. As an Oriental garden, however, it seems a tame affair, with none of the rich colour to be expected, only cream walls and green shadows; green water, green paint and sage-green

foliage, with a pavement of sober black and grey river-pebbles. But this is because the tourists rarely see the water-parterre in June, the month for which it was planned, when the Moorish court arrived from the Alhambra. Then the oleanders that line the walls and crowd the little islands are all in bloom, and the quiet harmony, the very restraint of its colouring, makes this patio the most perfect background for the glowing deep pink flowers.

An arched gateway opens upon steps rising to the next level. The landings have elaborate pebble mosaics and the parapet on either side is trimmed with potted plants. The plan of the Generalife given in Count Alexandre Laborde's *Voyage pittoresque et historique de l'Espagne*, published in 1812, shows that this stairway originally turned and led on to the narrow terrace above the cypress trees, and that the staircase wall, which formed the boundary of the garden on that side, had arched openings overlooking the park. This park, which was stocked with wild animals after the manner of a Persian "Paradise," is mentioned in Colmenar's *Délices de l'Espagne*. The four new upper terraces added since the plan was drawn are a remarkable demonstration of the continuity of Spanish garden-craft. Their box parterres and fountains might have been made at any time during the sixteenth century; some cast-iron railings alone betray the influence of the nineteenth century. At the far end of this new work, brick steps shaded by a vine trellis lead up to the white-washed mirador that crowns the old plan.

The original stairway to the mirador starts from the narrow terrace above the water-parterre, and is designed with circular landings and fountains at three levels. The parapet on either side has a grooved water-channel lined with tiles: a similar treatment of wall water-channels on a large scale could be seen at Talkatora Bagh outside Delhi,

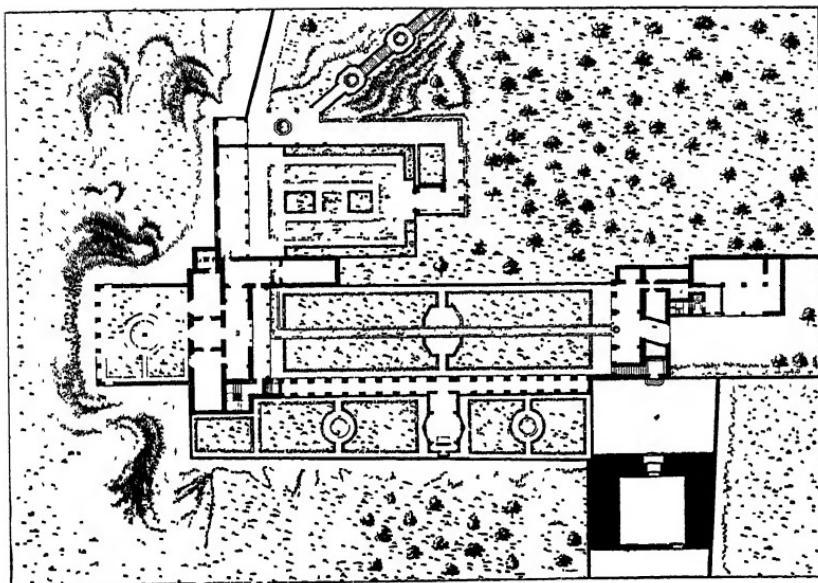


THE APRICOT ARCADE  
The Generalife



until this magnificent old garden was destroyed by a blunder in the planning of the new Indian capital.

The water stairway at the Generalife is completely hidden under a thick laurel canopy that forms a pergola over the whole motif. No more delightful approach to the upper



Plan of the Generalife in 1812

terrace on hot summer evenings can be imagined. Soothed by the shade and the ripple of the water running gaily down the parapets, tempted up from level to level by the flash and sparkle of the little fountains, one is lured on until finally the high mirador is reached. The pavilion itself was the special province of the Sultana, for in the East the leading lady of the harîm, or zenana, is always allotted the highest room of the palace, on account of its cool roof-pavilion and beautiful views. And few views can compare with that seen from the Sultana's Mirador at the Generalife when the sun goes down

## S P A N I S H   G A R D E N S

beyond the red-brown towers of Granada, lighting up for a brief moment with its dying beams the strange mountains of the western pass—a scene like some dream landscape of the old Italian school, a lovely fantasy in blue and gold and brown.

## Chapter V

### GRANADA CARMENS

“ Whither resorting from the vernal heat,  
Shall old acquaintance old acquaintance meet,  
Under the branch that leads above the wall  
To shed his blossom over head and feet.”

*Omár Khayyám.*

THE hillside gardens of the Generalife and the hill-top patios of the Alhambra, each in their way unique, tend to eclipse the fragments of Moorish garden work and the numerous carmens built under Moorish influence which can still be found in and around Granada. Less familiar to the outside world than the patio gardens of Seville and Cordova and other cities of the south, the Granadese carmens are just as typical a feature of Andalucian life. There is something in the very name that suggests romance. It recalls moonlight on the Albaicin, when the rise and fall of the guitars mingles with the silvery rippling of the little fountains, sounds echoing through dark, mysterious lattices or floating over high white-washed walls, stained and sordid enough in the daylight perhaps, but which the moonlight turns into the marble palaces of old time when this was the favourite Moorish quarter—a time recorded in the country chant, the haunting Moorish lament whose falling cadences are heard at evening when work ceases and men and animals come home: “ Granada, my beloved; O Granada, I shall never see thee again.”

Much as the Moors loved a hillside site, it so happens that two of the oldest carmens left are both down in the plain.

The Quarto Real, or Royal Room, now incorporated in the Renaissance palace of the Marqués de Guadiana, called the Quarto Real de San Domingo, lies in the city at the foot of the capitol hill. The fine vaulted room which gives its name to the palace was the hall of audience in Moorish days. It is used as the salon of the modern house, and an unusually lovely one it makes. In the subdued light coming from the pierced stone traceries that adorn the base of the lantern roof, the whole space glows with colour. The decorative plaster work still retains traces of its rich painting; the window recesses and tâka, or niches in the walls, are lined with splendid inlaid tiles; patches of polished marble gleam between the Oriental rugs covering the old pavement; and the same ivory-coloured marble forms the lotus fountain in the centre that has triumphantly survived eight centuries of changing taste.

The portico or arcade in front of this beautiful room has disappeared. Whichever it was it has gone, lost in the various alterations that have taken place. But immediately outside what is now the front door, is the garden fountain corresponding to that in the room within. In this case it is a very large basin, and beyond it, a lofty gallery of interwoven bay trees, 30 to 35 feet high and broad in proportion, paved with the characteristic river pebble mosaic in purple-grey and white, leads to the upper walls of the enclosure. On either side of the bay-tree alley the garden squares have lost their Moorish impress, and the present entrance in the extreme left-hand corner played no part in the original scheme.

Almost the same arrangement of building and garden is found at the Alcázar de Genil, the Moorish country house across the river belonging to the Duque de Gor. But the striking feature of the enclosure is its size, for most of the Moorish gardens that remain in Spain are small in scale,

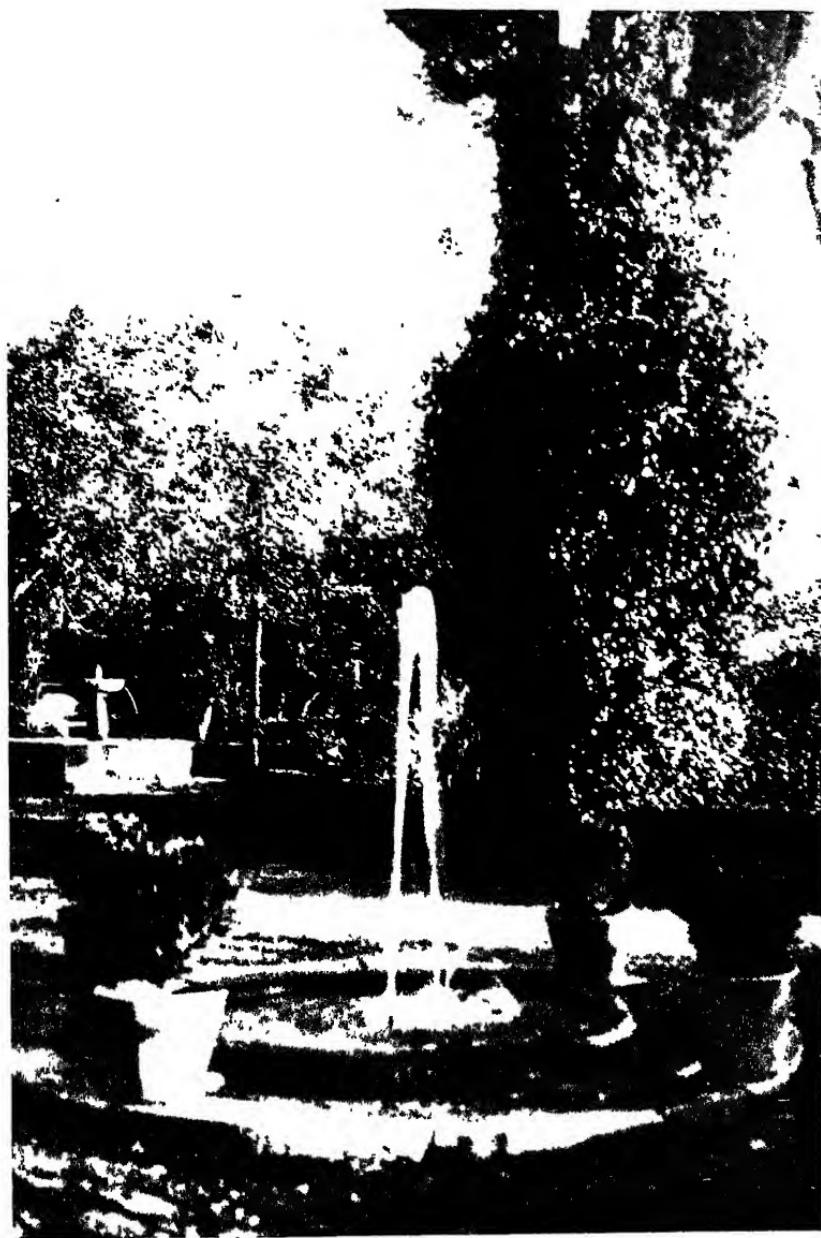


THE ALCÁZAR DE GENIL

PLATE XXV



LA ZUBIA



PALACIO DE CUZCO  
“The Fountains on the South Front”



PALACIO DE CUZCO

" Grass-grown Paths Overhung by Bushes of Pale Feathery Lilac "

often mere open-air extensions of the house. Here the proportion of house to garden is reversed.

The main building is in the form of three linked pavilions. A high central room with domed ceiling and a fountain and water-channel let into the white marble pavement, in style closely resembling the Quarto Real, is flanked on either hand by a two-storied wing. The buildings are connected by flat-topped walls, crowned with battlements of the favourite cypress tree motif; the shape so familiar from its constant use as a border to tiled wainscoting and dados. Fine old doors, divided for convenience of lighting into upper and lower sections, lead through a portico into the gardens, where a hideous wire erection covered with small flower-pots completely conceals the second fountain basin. Beyond this, again, a bridge spans a cross water-way, and a raised walk bordered by rose bushes continues down the centre of the large outer enclosure, ending some distance off with a glorieta of ancient cypress trees. Here, in Moorish times, stood a pavilion from which the Sultan and his court watched the aquatic festivals that were held in the huge tank, now only a green depression in the fields, but then filled with water from the river Genil.

The Christian princes and knights, who often found an asylum at the Court of Granada, were lodged, says Simonet, at the Alcázar de Genil. In all probability this was the place where the Sultan of the day received in state King Henry IV of Castile, brother of Isabella the Catholic, when he came in 1462 to visit Granada. It is on record that the two monarchs held a conference in a splendid pavilion in the Vega before the gates of the city; and how, when all was over—not forgetting a polite exchange of presents—the Spanish sovereign was escorted to the frontiers by a body of Moorish cavaliers. But the friendly rivalry in tourney and song between Christian and Moorish knights, that lights up the dark

pages of medieval Spanish history, was not to last much longer. Circumstances were rapidly becoming too unequal. In 1491 we find King Henry VII of England ordering a Te Deum to be sung in old St. Paul's for the taking of Granada by Ferdinand and Isabella, so greatly had the imagination of Christian Europe been stirred by what seemed the successful termination of the last crusade. The silver cross which had accompanied the Catholic kings throughout their campaigns against the Moors was borne in triumph before them and planted in the Alhambra. And here, in the Alcázar de Genil, a tall cross of typical Spanish ironwork stands amid the cypress trees, replacing the delicate marble pillars and cool tiled walls of the Moslem water-pavilion.

The Franciscan nunnery of Isabella la Real, founded by the Queen soon after the conquest, enshrines a third Moorish palace at Granada, called the Dar-al-Horra, or House of the Chaste. It is only shown on rare occasions, for the privileged visitor has to be of royal blood, or a cardinal, who, as a Prince of the Church may also be admitted. In passing it may be noted that such restrictions have grown more severe in Spain within recent years. Standing in the neglected but picturesque courtyard of the church, with its shady trees and clumps of broad-leaved acanthus pushing up through the pebble pavement, the dark spires of the cypresses catch the eye above a medley of brown roofs and walls revealing where the nunnery garden lies. And bushes of fragrant Persian lilac peep over the forbidden walls, evidence that some at least of the Moors' favourite flowers are still treasured within.

The Albaicin Hill on which the convent stands, is rich in carmens dating from Moorish times. Looking out over this old quarter from the openings of the Alhambra, they can easily be identified by their groups of venerable cypresses, usually four or more surrounding the central fountain. In every case the garden is entered through the house; but it

is a regular hill garden, laid out in a series of terraces, and not merely a succession of patios like the existing old gardens at Seville and Cordova. One of the best, perhaps, is the Carmen of Nuestra Señora de las Augustias, whose shrine in the outer wall facing the street is always filled with freshly gathered flowers. In this large carmen much of the original lay-out is left. Small water-channels run through the mosaic pebble walks, and on the lowest terrace, in the centre of a dim green hazel grove, a fountain pool is surrounded on three sides by Moorish seats built into the walls. The Carmen de Alonzo Cano, the famous artist and sculptor, who found life more to his taste at Granada than in his native Castile, the steeply terraced carmen by the Fajalaiya Gate, and the charming little carmen of Don Manuel de Peso Blanco, are other typical carmens of the Albaicin.

On the hill opposite, under the shadow of the Alhambra, is the Carmen de la Justicia, noted for its beautiful views. The Carmen de San Antonio at the foot of the Vermilion Tower has interesting details, among them a masonry pergola descending from a wall seat on the topmost terrace to a glorieta of old cypresses bound together by pink and white climbing roses.

I had heard so much of La Zubia, the Moorish garden across the Vega from which Isabella watched the final assault on the city, and where she was so nearly surprised and caught by the enemies' scouts, that I determined to get there, whatever the state of the road. In April it proved even worse than its description. Each mile or so, swamps caused by the careless irrigation blocked the way. For when the old channels under the highway fall into disrepair, the highway itself answers the Spanish farmer's purpose equally well. But La Zubia, now the summer palace of the Cardinal Archbishop of Granada, when reached at last was rather disappointing. It proved to be a group of somewhat featureless buildings in

the centre of a Moorish huerta, of which only the lines of the terraces remained, and a curious old stone well hidden under a canopy of laurels. It was in such another laurel grove, further down the garden, that Isabella escaped from the Moors, hearing the ring of their horses' hoofs on the pebbles, the jingling of the harness, the very words they spoke, as all unwittingly they passed by the hidden Queen.

On the return journey to the city I stopped to see the Carmen de Gomez, with a farmhouse attached, containing quarters for the owner and his family on their autumn visits to the Vega. It was a delightful old-fashioned carmen, its box parterres full of iris, roses, pansies and stocks. There was the central tank surrounded by iron verjas, deliciously scented syringa alleys in full bloom, and, what had first attracted my attention from the road, window openings in the walls at the end of the main paths framing lovely views over the far-reaching plain, vistas of green spring fields stretching away to the foothills of the Sierra Nevada.

Another old carmen outside Granada, this time on the Gaudix road, Carmenes de Gadeo, had eighteenth-century details which gave it a special character. The garden consisted of a broad upper terrace with a glorieta in the centre and an ornamental irrigation tank at the far end. Along the side next to the road ran a narrow lower terrace, and on the pillars of a former pergola a row of busts had been placed, resembling those in pale-green pottery that stand out so conspicuously on the highest terrace of the Generalife—probably from the Conde d'Aranda's factory at Alcora.

An even more adventurous motor run than that to La Zubia took me jolting over the hilly by-road to the village of Viznar. But the Palacio de Cuzco proved well worth the effort. The delight of discovering a house and garden built as late as 1795, untouched by any ripple of the romantic wave, that disastrous fashion for the "Jardin Anglais" as

it was called, which swept away old gardens all over Europe from 1750 onwards, is only to be felt in Spain. Happily for the garden lover, it is a country where, outside the capital, fashions change slowly. What with the natural conservatism of the people re-inforced by the medieval state of the roads, craftsmen in out-of-the-way places are still a century or more removed from their comrades in more accessible provinces. When the Colonial Bishop of the Cuzco family, newly appointed to the Archbishopric of Granada—his ancestral city—set to work to build a country palace, Moorish garden tradition still lingered on.

The entrance from the little village plaza, where a fountain of medieval pattern played merrily into a stone basin, was reserved and plain as befitted a high ecclesiastic, with a mind set on heavenly rather than earthly treasures. The Moorish feeling that the blank house front should give no hint of the beauties within suited itself to his purpose. The long narrow zaguán or entrance-hall, used in the houses of the old hill towns as the mule stable, here held nothing more unusual than the family barouche, a forlorn-looking object, its silk blinds and shutters drawn since the last time, years ago, it had bumped out from Granada. In the second hall on the left, an imposing stairway, decorated at intervals with big tiled stands to hold orange trees, lead to a series of state rooms facing south over the valley. And so well was the palace hidden away behind the block of the large parish church that their size and importance came as quite a surprise.

These rooms, leading by double doors one into another, being all decorated alike, gave, in their simplicity, a fine and dignified effect. They must have been left very much as the Archbishop planned them. The walls were cream, with cream coved ceilings, finished by a broad band of red bordered with gold. The dados were frescoed in red arabesques, enclosing landscapes in various colours. The woodwork everywhere

was painted a blue-green matching the floors, which were tiled in this colour and white in alternate squares. Beautiful chandeliers of La Granja glass hung from the ceilings, and specimens of flower-painted jars from this royal factory stood about the rooms. The furniture too, had happily escaped replacement, and was of the same period. Dark old portraits and some large religious paintings adorned the walls, together with a series of Baroque mirrors, of the kind so often seen in Spanish churches; but what most delighted me were two little embroidered pictures in Empire frames each representing a Spanish country house and garden, complete with its fountains, its cypresses, and its verjas.

The sunlight streaming through the tall windows touched the opposite walls, giving warning it was time to be gone if the gardens were to be seen that day. They were equally worth exploring. The south terrace that ran the whole length of the building was planned on old lines, with cypress trees at the corners of the walks and a medley of flowers and fruit trees enclosed within high clipped box hedges. Although the paths were not much raised, the shallow central fountain basin let into the ground was typically Moorish. On either side two other fountains were playing, exactly similar in shape to one set up in Cordova by the Catholic kings at a hospital they founded in 1495. This path with the fountains at intervals terminated at one end in a picturesque stone seat and at the other in a shrine to the Blessed Virgin built into the outer wall. Close under the house, a high pergola with monolith posts shaded the windows of the summer quarters. From a balcony on this first terrace, ramps led down to the main garden, a large square jutting out from the hillside like a great bastion. Formerly this garden had been completely surrounded by another such pergola, and very magnificent it must have looked when all the stones were standing. But now many of the pillars had fallen and lay buried in the rank

growth, while others had evidently suffered a worse fate and had been broken up and carried off into the village.

When I reached a third garden to the north side of the palace, it was already late. It lay in shadow, a lovely harmony of grey walls, grey stone fountains, and grass-grown paths overhung by bushes of pale, feathery lilac. On the narrow terraced walk against the upper wall the water-channel made a low murmuring, but here the fountains were silent: they had long ceased to play; the frescos under the shelter of the house arcades, telling in vivid tones the story of Don Quixote, alone gave life and colour to this enclosure.

Passing back through the cool summer quarters of the ground floor, through the vast, dim kitchen where rows of copper pots and pans twinkled in a friendly and familiar manner from the walls, I was just in time to see the fountains on the south front shoot up in a last display, making rainbows in the evening sunshine before they suddenly died away. Then, one by one the great keys were turned in their locks, and regretfully, this palace of old Spain was left to dream again undisturbed over its memories.

It was growing dusk before the city came into sight. The witchery of Granada at night has to be seen to be realized. The suffused glow from streets and patios, the brighter glare of the public plazas, the network of little electric lights spreading out over the Vega, linking village to village in a Milky Way across the plain, until the solitary beams from farmsteads on the distant hillsides merge indistinguishably into the lower stars, form a scene of mysterious beauty, with the earth the mirage of the sky. To such marvels of science we soon grow accustomed—every cueva, gypsy cave-dwelling, has its little electric globe—but the builder of Cuzco, who loved beautiful things in his day, would no doubt be astonished could he look down and see his diocese turned each night into this fairy paradise.

## Chapter VI

### THE ALCÁZAR

“ Esta cibdad tan notabile  
e tanti cavellerosa,  
tan fertile e abundosa,  
tan dulce e tan delictabile.”

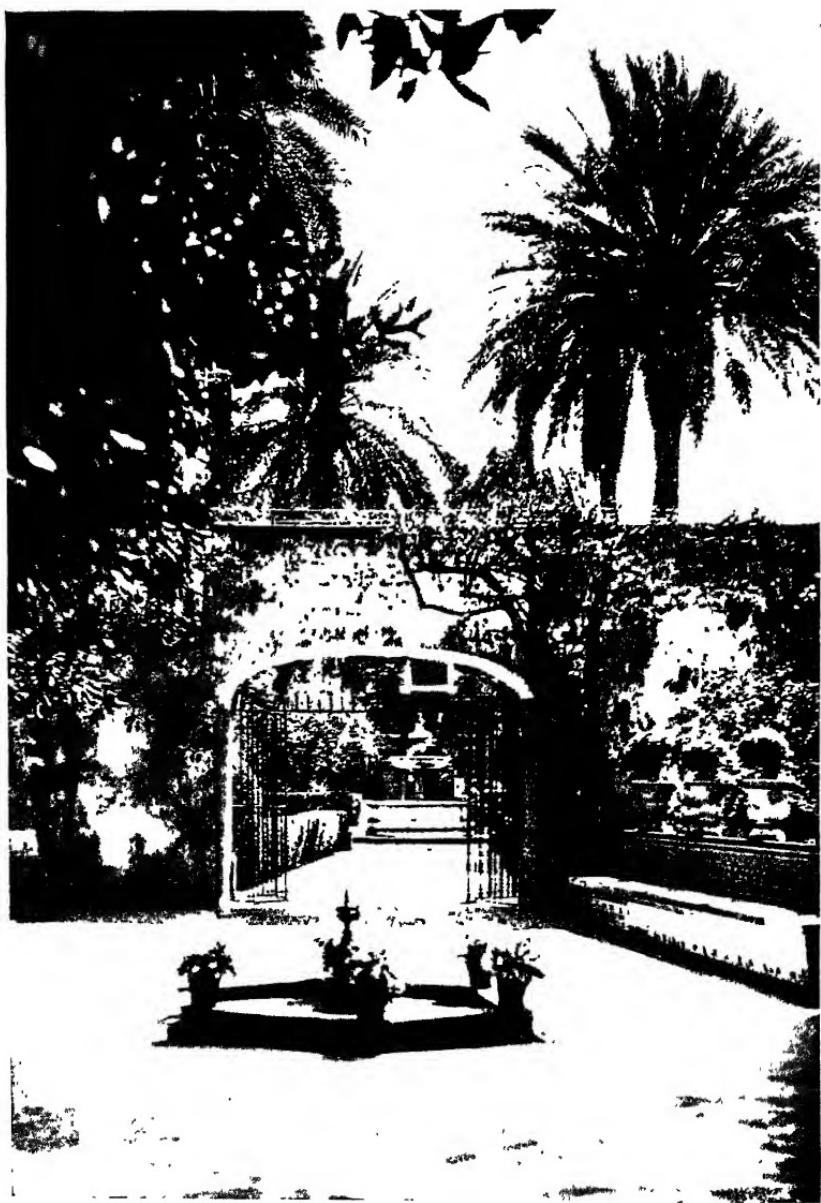
*Fernán de Guzmán.*

THE largest Moorish garden left in Spain, the Alcázar at Seville, was built a hundred years after the Christian conquest of the city. Its style is due to the Moorish craftsmen who remained unmolested, in 1350, when Peter the Cruel ascended the throne of St. Ferdinand. It was they who laid out this palace for the King of Castile on the ruins of the former citadel, and they laid it out according to their own traditions. “ Glory to our Lord the Sultan Don Pedro ” is one Arabic inscription. Another flowing scroll with the text: “ There is but one God; He is eternal; He was not begotten and has never begotten, and He has no equal,” shows they trusted that the king, or at least his father confessor, could not read Arabic. How much of Don Pedro’s work remains is impossible to say with any certainty, but the Moorish impress given to the design has never been lost. Successive kings of Spain have fallen under its spell. Whatever they did to other palaces, they altered the character of the Alcázar surprisingly little. The presiding genius of the place is still that fantastic monarch of the late Middle Ages, admired or hated, called Pedro el Justiciero, or Pedro el Cruel, according to the speaker’s point of view.

The rebuilt Alcázar suited Don Pedro, for there was something very Oriental in the temperament of this king.



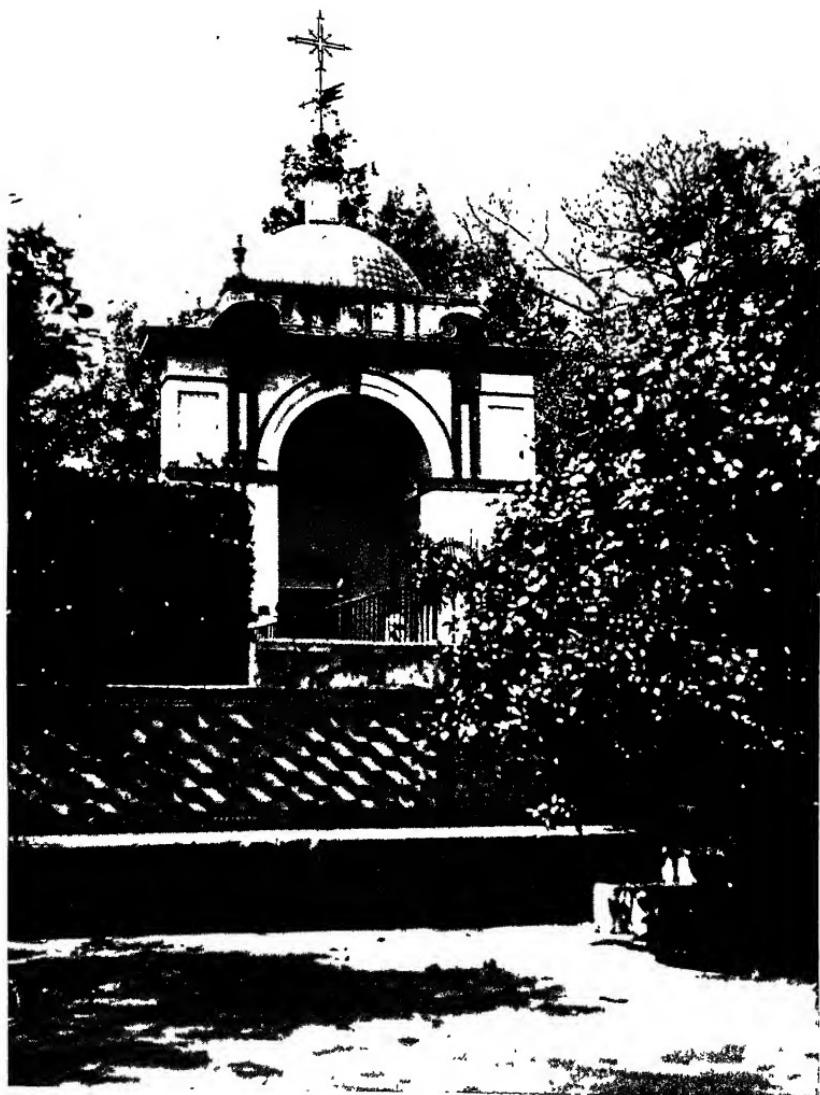
ALCÁZAR GARDENS  
Pool and Entrance Loggia



THE ALCÁZAR  
Gardens of Maria de Padilla



THE ALCÁZAR  
Garden and Pavilion of Charles V



THE ALCÁZAR  
The Baroque Pavilion

From the stories told of him, he might have taken as his model Khálif Haroun-el-Raschid of Bagdad, with a dash of Bluebeard of nursery fame thrown in. His habit of wandering about the city in disguise to enquire at first hand into its administration is commemorated by the king's head in effigy, high up on the wall at the corner of the little street called the Calle Cabeza de Don Pedro.

We meet him in his rôle of Oriental potentate in the Patio de las Banderas at the entrance to the palace. In this square, planted with orange trees, after the manner of the Court of the Mosque at Cordova, the king, seated on a low stone throne, would hear complaints and dispense a rough and ready justice. The square formed a Court of Public Audience, a Diwan-i-Am, such as can still be seen on entering the fortress palaces of Lahore, Delhi and Agra. That the quality of Don Pedro's justice had a certain grim humour, is shown by his ruling in the case of a priest who had murdered a shoemaker. The ecclesiastical tribune condemned the offender to be suspended from his sacerdotal functions for a year; hearing of this, the king decreed that any tradesman who murdered a priest was to be suspended from following his trade for a similar period. A judgment not unlike that of the late Maharaja of Jaipur, who, when a general "hartal" (mourning) was ordered in his capital by the followers of Gandi, declared that any tradesman found mourning had better mourn thoroughly. In such case, the man's shop would be closed for six months and the state guard on the building paid by the owner. So priests walked warily in Seville in the days of Don Pedro, and there were no more threats of hartals in Jaipur bazaar.

Leaving the Court of the Banderas and passing through the dark Apeadero, the passage with coupled columns added by Philip V, the eye is caught by a richly ornamented shrine to the Virgin in the end wall. Every deep archway has its

guardian shrine in Spain. The primitive superstition that it is dangerous to walk under a structure of any sort—even a ladder—like most taboos, had a practical origin. Who knows on how many occasions, in troubrous times, the sudden flash of dagger from cloak may have been checked by the votive lamp, the little spark of light twinkling in the darkness of the arch. There were riots in Madrid when the Bourbon, Charles III, tried to make assassination more difficult by forbidding long cloaks that muffled up the chin.

But no wonder-working Virgin protected Sultan Abu Said when he came to solicit Don Pedro's alliance after usurping the throne of Granada. He arrived in state, bringing a splendid retinue, and was received with consideration and lodged in the Alcázar. His grandeur proved his undoing. For he was murdered partly, it was said, on account of the superb ruby glowing in his turban, which his impulsive host no sooner saw than coveted.

This ruby was afterwards presented to the Black Prince, who had been fighting for the Spaniards in the war against Portugal, and, disgusted with the king's cruelties and lack of faith, was on the point of returning home—a gift, under the circumstances, another of Don Pedro's ironies. The ruby now adorns the royal crown of England, together with a more famous eastern stone of happier memory, the Mountain of Light, the Koh-i-noor diamond given in the first instance to the garden-loving Emperor Babar by the Maharaja of Gwalior, in recognition of his mercy to a conquered Hindu town.

The shadow of Don Pedro follows one into the palace gardens, where the nearest series of patios and terraces is called after the gentle Maria de Padilla, the king's favourite, the only creature his fierce spirit loved. Her bath, once an open-air bathing-pool, after the custom of eastern harîms, is now vaulted over by buildings of a later date.

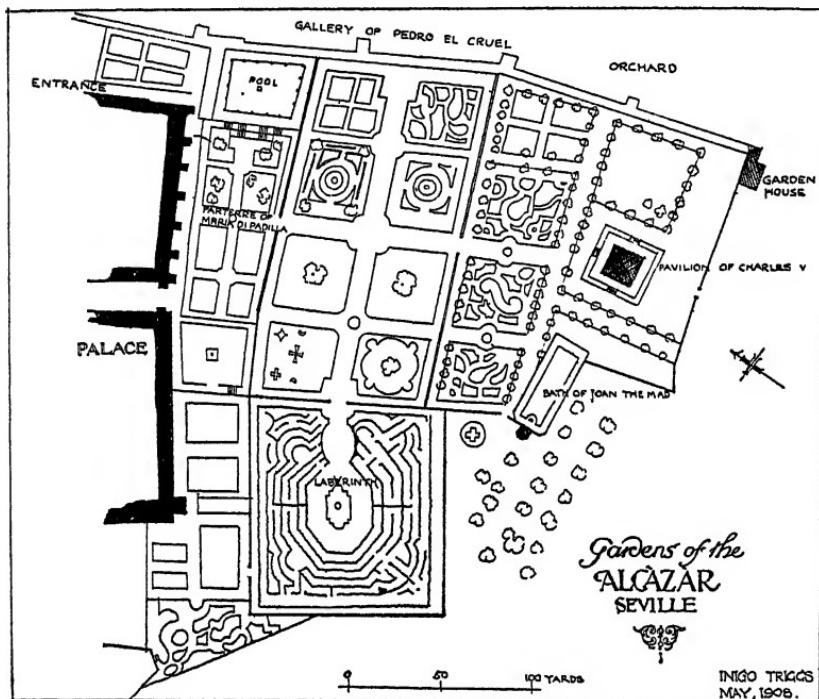
## THE ALCÁZAR

From the paved walk surrounding the main irrigation tank in the north-west corner immediately above these gardens, a general view of the enclosure can be obtained. It must be confessed that the first impression is disappointing. The whole effect is marred by the fact that the buildings and gardens are now cut off from each other. For the same reason the rooms of the palace, isolated from their garden courts, present a lifeless and dull appearance in spite of their rich decoration. It cannot be too often repeated that Oriental domestic architecture is based on the union of house and garden. The whole scheme, in such a palace as this, rests on a series of interdependent rooms, some closed in, some half-closed in, some entirely in the open air; a succession of patios at varying levels connecting the state rooms with the larger garden squares. But as these patios are shut off from the palace and can only be approached from the garden side, their purpose is not apparent, the design seems confused and suffers in consequence.

Lack of prospect is another drawback to the Alcázar. Building for an Arab master, the garden planner's chief concern (after the water supply) was to retain an open view on one side. The Alcázar of Moorish days stretched down to the river bank; it covered a vast area, including in its confines the Palacio del Santelmo and the Torre del Oro. Rebuilt for a Spanish king, it is hemmed in by a maze of narrow streets; and this want of prospect added to the present divorce of house and garden makes the palace at Seville seem tame after the Alhambra. Its compensating wall-promenades, a notable feature of the Alcázar's construction, are not taken into account at first glance, for, together with the private rooms on the upper floors with which they communicate, they are closed to the general public. But these walks that run along the top of the patio walls and the long gallery in Don Pedro's fortified wall to the north, are a delightful expedient for

## S P A N I S H G A R D E N S

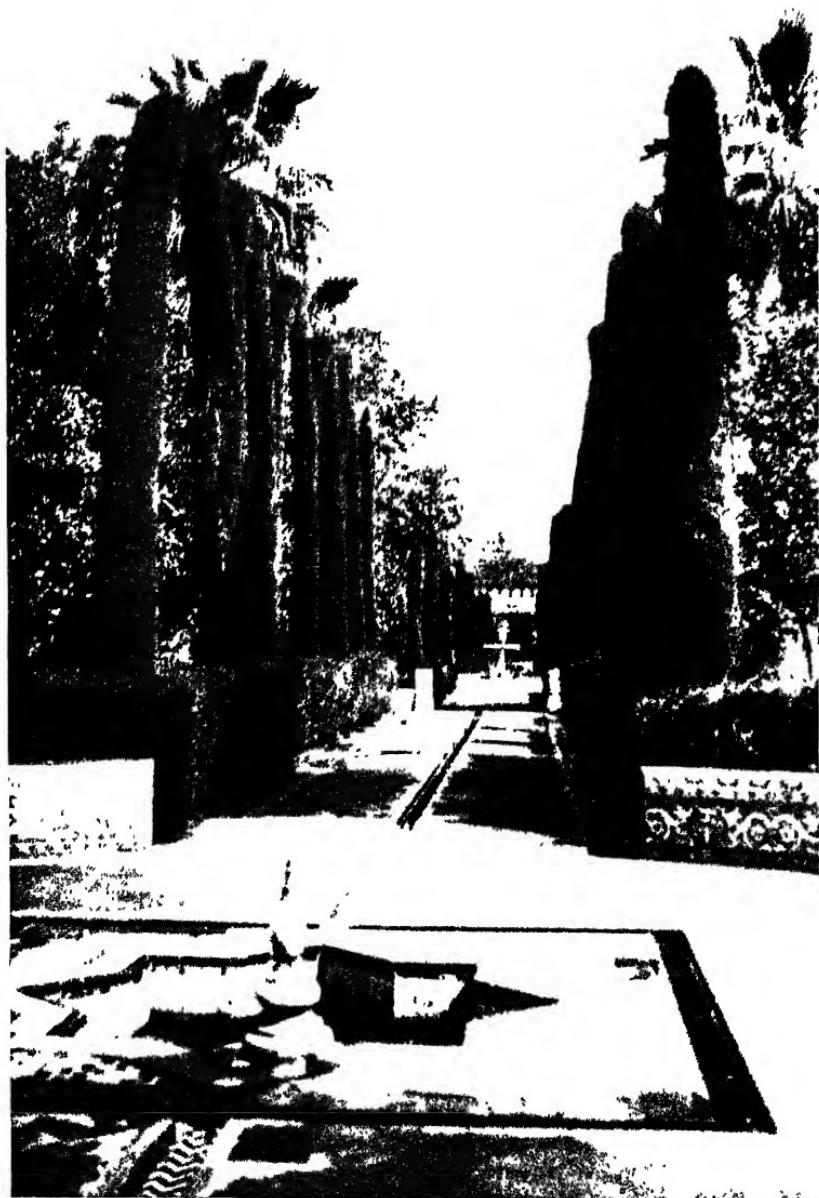
giving a pleasure on a flat site something of the variety and charm of a hillside garden. The tiled seats and steps at the changes of level repeat the decoration below, where the parterres lie spread out before the eyes in all their detail; while from this height there are far views over the town and across the river to the hills that bound the Guadalquivir valley.



The enclosure of the Alcázar is still over sixteen acres in extent, a fairly large garden as gardens go in Spain. It is laid out in a haphazard manner, no two patios at right angles to each other. This irregularity is puzzling in a flat situation, especially to those familiar with the great gardens of the East where symmetry is the salient feature, until it is remembered that by Don Pedro's day, Arab culture had given place to Moorish ideas. The immense gardens of Cordova were



THE ALCÁZAR  
Pool of Joan the Mad



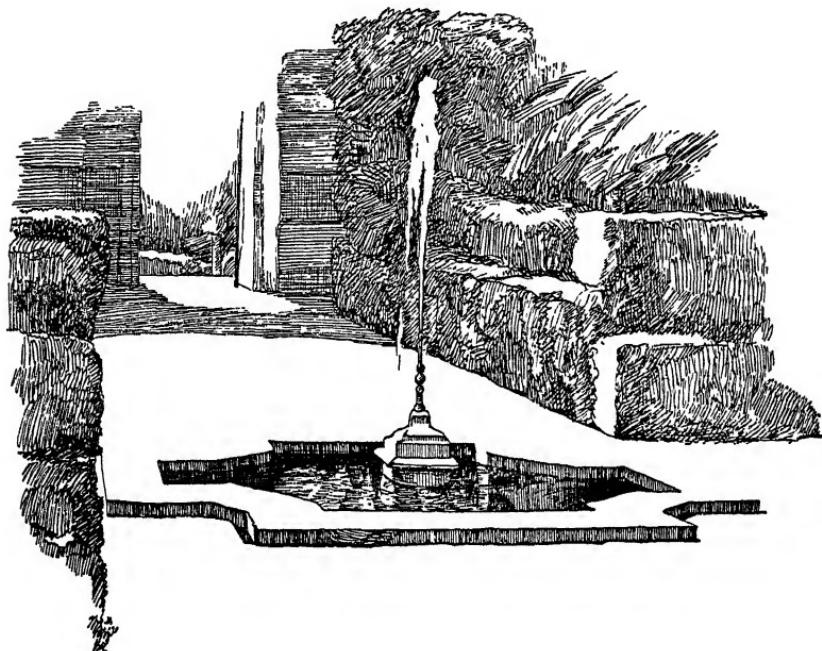
THE ALCÁZAR  
The "Cypress Arches"

then in ruins, and such pleasure-grounds as the Moors attempted were confined, like those of medieval Europe, within small walled towns and castles where space was at a premium. The tradition of a great lay-out had been forgotten. It was not recaptured until the spacious days of the Renaissance; even then it was only partially recovered in Spain.

After the Jardines de Maria de Padilla, the pavilion of Charles V and its setting is the most interesting part of the gardens. The Emperor Charles V, grandson of Isabella the Catholic, belonged to an age of great rulers: Francis I, Henry VIII, Suleiman the Magnificent, and Babar, founder of the Mughal Empire in India, were all contemporaries, and united in their taste for magnificent building and gardening. When Henry of England was building Nonsuch, in Surrey, with its pyramid fountains, and Babar was laying out the Ram Bagh at Agra, Charles V, captivated by the eastern spirit of Seville, was adding a gem of Oriental tile-work to the existing royal demesne.

As it stands to-day, the Alcázar is a perfect museum of tiles. They form the principal colour motif of the gardens, and are far more important than the flowers. The four processes through which the manufacture of majolica decoration passed can all be studied here. The earliest form is that of tile mosaic, where the majolica is cut out in separate colour and inlaid into the ground work. These can be seen in some of the palace rooms. The second is called Cuerda Seca, from the raised line of grease and manganese which divide the wet colours and prevents them running together. Cuenca was the name given to the third process where the design is depressed, leaving ridges separating the colours. At the beginning of the sixteenth century a monk from Pisa introduced a fourth process, the direct method of painting on faience as practised in Florence by the Della Robbias, and tiles decorated in this way were called after him—Pisanos.

This manner of decoration is not so lasting as the other three. The painted Pisanos are liable to lose their colour through the paint cracking and flaking off when exposed to the weather. But the freedom of drawing and the rich colouring made the style very popular. Whole pictures were composed and painted on tiles, such as "the Visitation" over



A Tiled Fountain, Alcázar, Seville

the altar in the palace oratory built in 1504 by order of Ferdinand and Isabella.

Magnificent examples of Cuerda Seca and Cuenca tiles cover the pavilion of Charles V which is set in the centre of a paved court of about half an acre. Beautiful azulejos, with a coppery lustre, form the dado of the building, where under the cedar-wood dome a marble fountain-basin and narrow water-channel carry out the old Moorish plan. Another such treatment of the water can be seen in the building on the

## THE ALCÁZAR

right at the entrance to the main palace; but in the garden itself the irrigation channels are hidden under the brick paths. Tiled seats showing a great variety of azulejos surround the pavilion, and brilliant tiles form the rises of the steps and edge the circular sunk beds for orange trees which adorn the open court. I found no trace here of the stone or brick-patterned parterres characteristic of irrigated gardens in the East, but these tiled pockets for fruit trees placed at intervals round this lovely little pavilion are a similar development due to the irrigation.

Before leaving this enchanting spot to explore the bathing pool of Joan the Mad, and its later Baroque pavilion which is linked up with the scheme of Charles V, a curious azulejos, protected by bars, in the floor of the main pavilion should be examined. Its design represents the original maze destroyed by the sixteenth-century lay-out. Gazing at its plan vividly recalls the earliest mention of such a record. "Thou also, son of man, take thee a tile and portray on it the city, even Jerusalem," said the Prophet, Ezekiel; and what plan can be more permanent than one burned into a tile?

The Alcázar has a subtle spell which grows with every return to the gardens. It is compounded of orange-blossom scent and sunshine, with interwoven harmonies of green and apricot and gold. There is the deep green of the shining magnolia leaves, their under-sides rust-red; grey-green of waving palms and smooth-clipped hedges of myrtle and box, and yellow-green of the orange and lemon trees weighed down by their fruit, whose golden balls are scattered here and there over the glistening pavement after a sudden shower of rain such as blows up the river valley in the early days of March. And the tile-work, instead of standing out with startling abruptness as it often does in a modern setting, merely repeats and enriches the general impression. It is seen to perfection in the circular seats on the west side of the

majolica pavilion. Backed by close-cut box hedges, these azulejos painted with scrollsof emerald, azure and Indian-red, on a yellow ground, glow in the suffused light filtering down through the over-arching orange trees, and fit into the garden scheme with a satisfying completeness. When the fountains play, nothing in the Alcázar can quite compete with this vista down the west walk ending in Charles V pavilion.

The planting of this old royal demesne is a remarkable instance of traditional gardening. The architectural features of a garden may well withstand the centuries; the horticultural side of the lay-out is another affair, and one much more easily changed. Happily Spanish conservatism has preserved for us the planting of the irrigated garden. It is almost unknown elsewhere. None of the larger Mughal baghs have their planting left intact. Changes of taste have altered gardens in Turkey and Kashmir more than in Spain. To see the details of Moslem gardening, such as linger in old tales or can be traced in the background of oriental miniature paintings, one must go to Andalucia.

Here in the Alcázar are the high-clipped hedges that disguise the edges of the raised masonry paths, with four palms planted formally one at each corner of the sunk plots. At other places where the walks cross, four cypresses are bent over and woven together to represent little pavilions. Many of the squares are devoted to fruit trees. Some have elaborate parterres, one of which represents the insignia of the military orders cut in box. When Lady Holland, wife of the English Ambassador to Madrid, visited the Alcázar in 1803, she mentions that "the gardens are preserved in the Moorish style, one part is precisely as at the conquest, clipped hedges of myrtle and devices cut upon them." The planting of large trees at the base of the walls is another typical feature. A narrow strip of earth is excavated and the roots placed deep in the soil, so that they may not raise the bricks of the paved

## THE ALCÁZAR

walk. The traditional avenues of alternate cypress and flowering tree have disappeared, together with the maze constructed by the Moors. The cypress and peach-blossom motif, so well known in every form of Islamic art, more particularly on rugs and tiles, is the vivid symbol of eternity and human life, the dark cypress the eternal background upon which is spread the lovely but fragile rhythm of individual existence. But some of this old garden symbolism has unconsciously survived. Several of the parterres have a raised oblong bed in their centre, crowned with a rose bush or other small shrub, illustrating the flight of Laila on her camel-litter to join her distracted lover who had taken refuge in the desert —an episode from the famous tale of Majnun and Laila, the eastern Romeo and Juliet.

Such details are the more interesting because the gardens have been replanted several times. A photograph taken twenty-six years ago gives the same general impression, although the corner palms in the beds below the main irrigation pool are only half their present size. It shows that the gardening of the Alcázar is no mere accidental survival from past ages, but a unique example of traditional planting handed down by many generations of men.

The names of the plants also recall old associations. All peaches are still "Flowers of Damascus," even the brilliant camilla-flowered importation with double carmine blossoms beloved of Kew, but despised by the Alcázar gardeners because its fruit is worthless. A later conquest is recalled by the "Nut of America," a large tree near the pavilion of Charles V, dominating the other trees in the garden.

Abu Zacaria's book on agriculture, a twelfth-century work that somehow escaped the zeal of Cardinal Ximenes, and survived to be translated into French, has several chapters on flowers. He mentions the oleander—noticed at the Generalife —rose, jasmine, clove-pink, lily, arum-lily, lotus, white and

yellow ox-eye daisies, iris and narcissus, and the herbs, balm, mint, marjoram, lavender and thyme.

Many of these were indigenous plants. The rose oleanders in the beds of the mountain streams between Ronda and Arcos are a wonderful sight in June. A month earlier the white and yellow daisies form the groundwork to a carpet of myriad colours in the plains of the Guadalquivir below Cordova. But other flowers and shrubs were importations. The jasmine, next to the rose in Oriental favour, reached Europe from Arabia, by way of Spain.

With the new importations came something of their symbolism, for gardening, like every other Eastern art, had its symbolic no less than its practical meaning and arrangement, and these memories clung to the transported flowers. After the Moors had been displaced Moslem attributes and Persian floral fancies became emblems of the Christian virtues, and were included in the heraldry of the saints. Glowing roses typified the fire of missionary zeal, the azure fleur-de-lis suggested the calm of celestial contemplation, which aspires above the sky to the " Immortal Choir." The Rosa Mariae, the Rose of Jericho, was believed by the pilgrims to the Holy Sepulchre to have sprung up at each resting-place on the flight into Egypt. It was said to have blossomed for the first Christmas, to have closed at the Crucifixion, and re-opened on Easter Day. The white iris of Moslem graveyards was sacred to the Madonna and the flower of hope, light and power. Its threefold petals represented the Trinity and the virtues of faith, wisdom and valour. In Spain the lily was adopted by the Knightly Order of Our Lady of Old Time as their crusading device. Henceforward the Lilies of Our Lady became the special mark of Andalucian design, and the jar or vase with the two-branched lily springing from it was known as the Heraldic Arms of the Virgin. The four pierced iron-work vases filled with lilies crowning the corners of the

## THE ALCÁZAR

beautiful Giralda Tower are a typically Spanish decoration familiar to those who have visited Seville. Over the doorway of the Archbishop's palace at the foot of the minaret, these Arms of the Virgin occur again. The sacred lotus in its water-pot, worshipped from the earliest times as the flame of life, found in this guise a way into Christian art and legend; the vase holding the lilies took the place of the lota, or Water-pot of the World, from which the Indian flower sprang. Some Spanish artists went so far as to paint Our Lady sitting on a water-lily, like Buddha wrapped in contemplation floating on the Lotus of the Good Law.

## Chapter VII

### ANDALUCIAN PATIOS

Earth is teeming like the musk-pod  
with aromas rich and rare,  
Foliage bright as parrot's plumage  
dost the graceful willow wear.  
On the branches of syringa  
necklaces of pearls we see,  
Ruby ear-rings of Badakhshan  
sparkle on the Judas-tree.

*Farrukhi.*

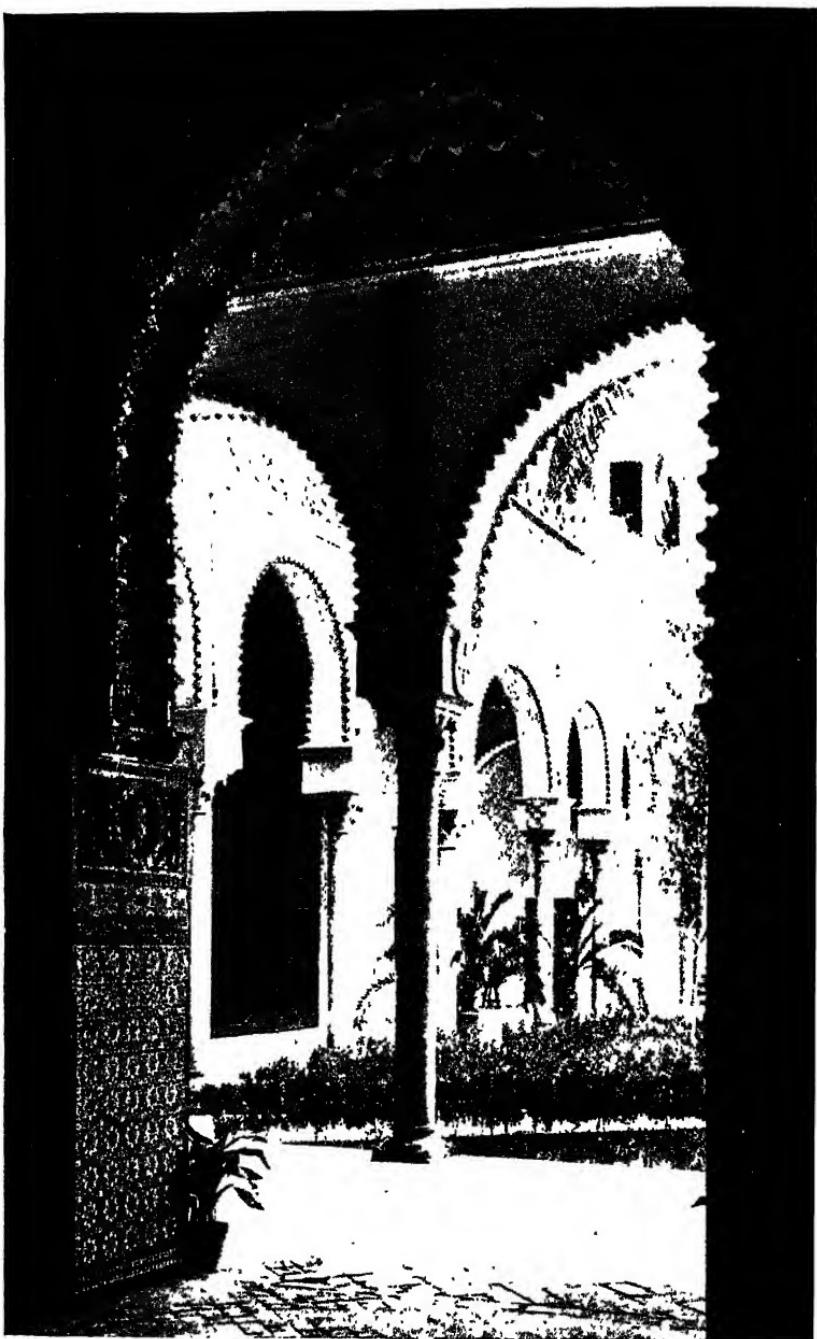
**I**N Spain, as in Italy and other mountainous countries, every district has its sharply defined characteristics, its local colour. Each province, isolated and cut off from its neighbours by mountain barriers, has moved in an orbit of its own and re-acted differently to outside influences. For instance, the Renaissance took a century longer to reach Estramadura on the Portuguese frontier than other more accessible provinces. Even within a single province, where the same building material obtains, marked varieties of treatment are found.

The three principal cities of Andalucia—Seville, Granada and Cordova—each evolved a style of its own in domestic architecture. This is best seen in the patio, as the Moorish plan of the plain exterior and richly decorated interior persists in the south. In each case the building material is the same, a mixture of rubble and adobe covered with stucco, but the results obtained differ considerably.

The old Granadese patios show Mudejar workmanship in their wooden pillars and balconies. The Casa del Chapez,



SEVILLE  
The Lilies of Our Lady



SEVILLE  
Casa del Duque de Alba

where the plinths are carved into shapes curiously suggestive of Indian influence, is an example. But such patios have no painting, and probably never had any, for the Granadese custom of terraced gardens above or below the house made the courtyard garden unnecessary.

The Cordova type of patio is the simplest and most homely. Stone pillars are often replaced by masonry piers; tiles are used sparingly; the pavement is a pebble mosaic; and the colour decoration consists, as a rule, of bands of blue, yellow or red kalsomine wash, a simple means, in strong sunlight, of producing a very charming and telling effect.

Seville, being the richest and leading city of the south, naturally boasts the most elaborate architectural patios. Their height, fine marble pavements and pillars, profusion of tile-work and magnificent iron *rejas*, give an impression of sumptuousness and grandeur more akin to the great Italian palaces of the Renaissance than to their modest neighbours up and down the Guadalquivir valley. Beautiful as these Seville patios are, they lack the special appeal—the intimate charm—of the Cordovian interiors.

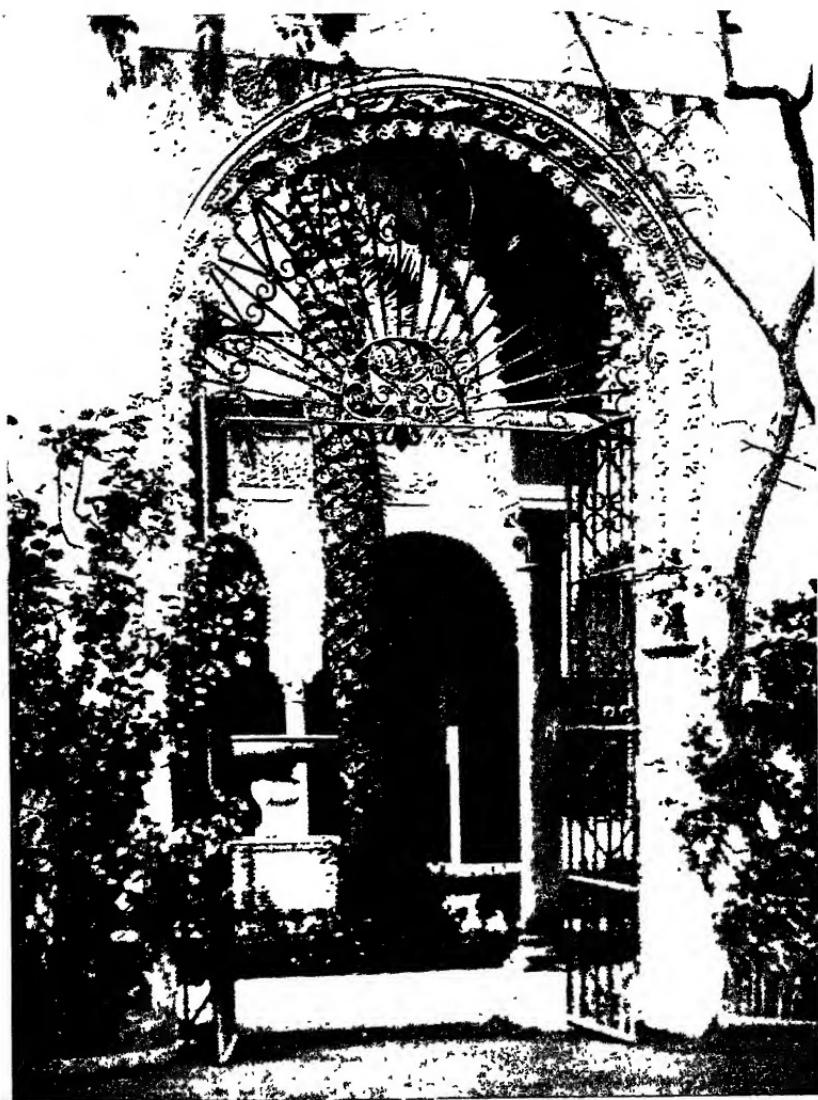
This remark does not apply to such early examples as the Casa de las Duenas, the old Mudejar palace of the Duke of Alba. The property originally belonged to the Pinedas family, but the palace had to be sold to pay the huge ransom demanded when a son of the house was captured by the Moors of Granada in a border foray. The powerful family of Ribera who bought it, completed the building some time after 1483.

A plain-looking gateway leads into a large forecourt—an unusual feature in a Spanish town house. Across this open space lies the main entrance through a sanded *zaguan*. The principal patio with its big fountain and palms gives on one side into a small flower-garden, and enchanting glimpses of its cypress and flowering trees are seen through the grilled doorway and window openings of the typically Spanish screen

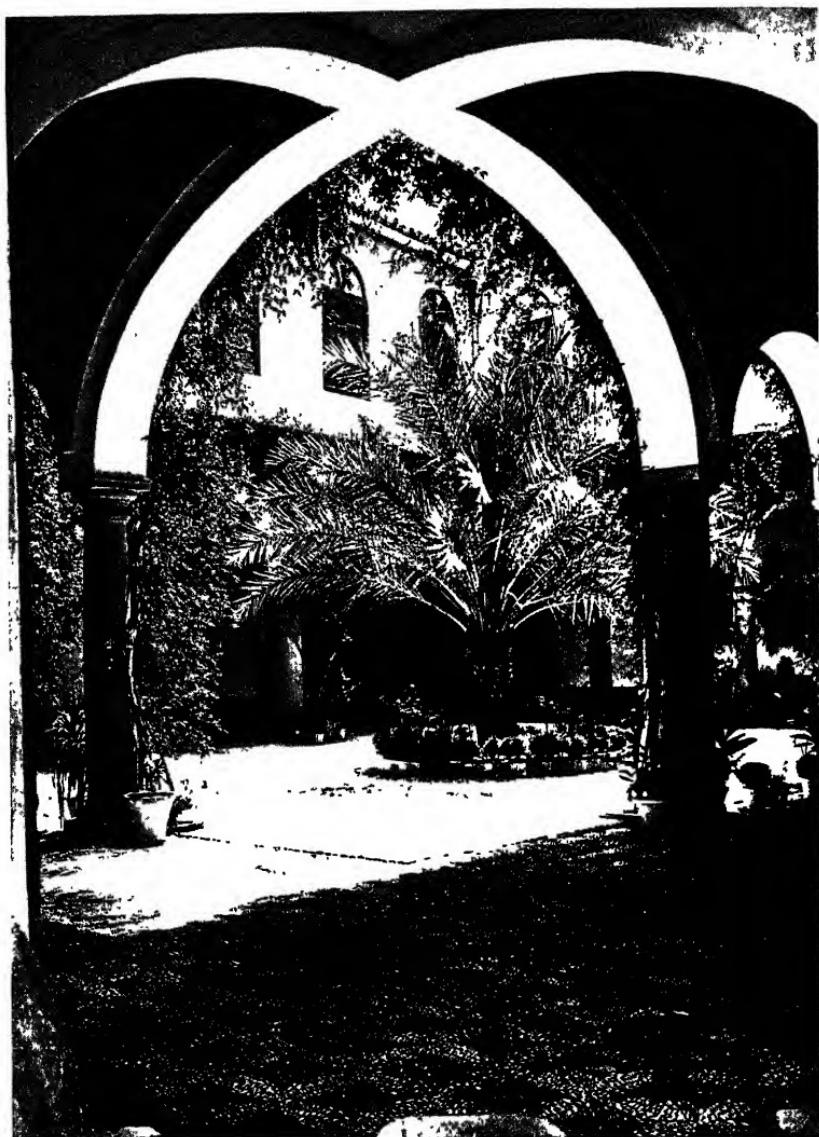
wall. At the back of the house is another garden, a long narrow enclosure planted with orange trees irrigated from a pool at one end.

As the climate of Southern Spain embraces extremes of heat and cold, the houses are divided horizontally, forming winter and summer quarters. The balconies running round the upper storey of the patio are generally glassed in, and make convenient sitting-rooms, catching every ray of the winter sun. Leading off these galleries are the winter dining-room and other apartments. This series of rooms is duplicated on the ground floor for use in summer; the galleries below being open to the patio where a fountain keeps the air cool, and a vine trellis casts a light transparent shade without the stuffiness of a more solid awning. On the ground floor, among other rooms, is the family estate-office where the products of the cortijo—country place or farm—the bottles of wine and olive oil, and sample baskets of grain and dried fruits, stand in picturesque rows among the files and typewriters of a modern office equipment. The chapel, always richly decorated, as a rule occupies a strategic position, half-way down the grand stairway. Most of these features can be seen at the Casa de las Duenas, where the summer dining-room, opening through a loggia directly on the garden pool, is a typical instance of Spanish planning for the hot weather—a delightful blending of house and garden possible only when the whole scheme is securely walled in.

Another old palace at Seville, that of the Duke of Medinaceli, has an interesting Moorish garden; but what remains is only a fragment of the original grounds which suffered badly from the bombardment of 1840. The palace bears the strange name of the Casa de Pilatos. Its title arose out of a journey to Jerusalem undertaken by the Marqués de Tarifa, the people believing that the house he built on his return was a copy of the Roman Governor's in the Holy City.



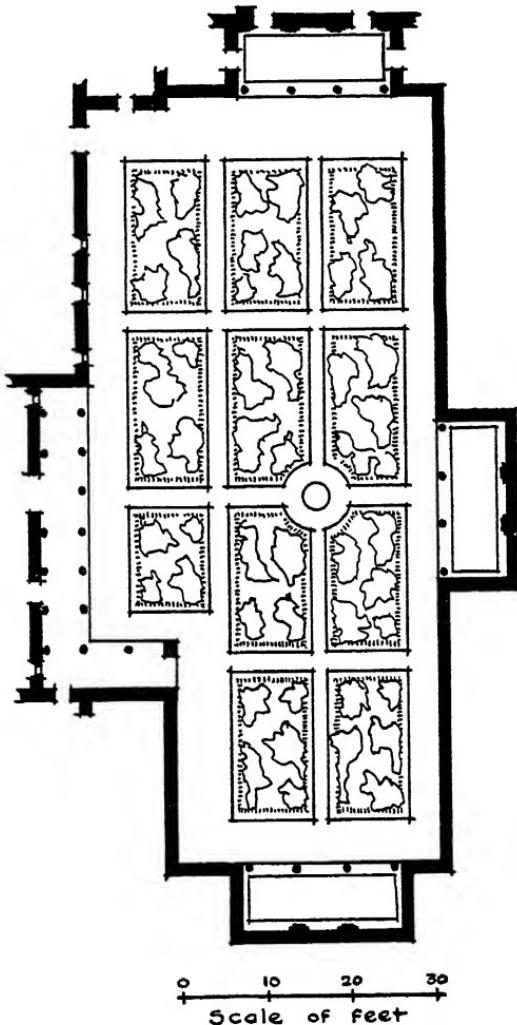
SEVILLE  
Garden Grilles, Casa del Duque de Alba



CORDOVA  
Entrance Court, Casa de Don Gomez

## ANDALUCIAN PATIOS

This splendid palace, a chef d'œuvre of Mudejar art, became a centre of Spanish culture under the third Duke of Alcalá.



Plan of N.W. Garden, Palace of the Duke of Medinaceli, Seville

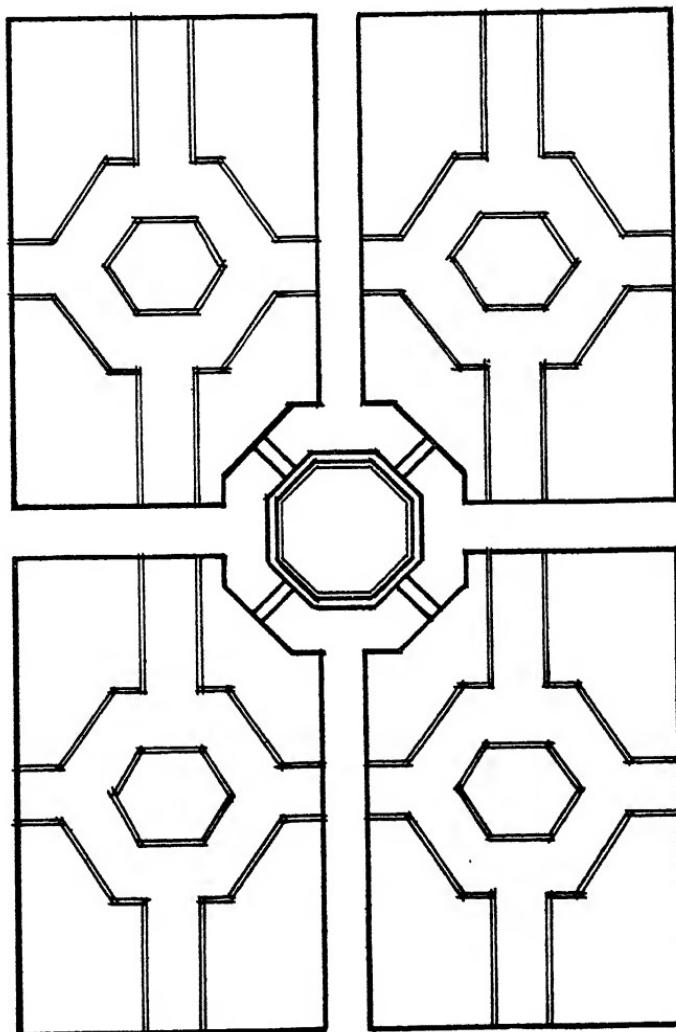
Following the example of the Medici family at Florence, he established a fine library of classical manuscripts, and added to the collection of Roman antiques brought back by his father, Per Afan Ribera, Viceroy of Naples. The

leading artists and writers of the day found a welcome there, among them Cervantes, at that time the Seville Commissioner of taxes; and very bored the great man seems to have been with this prosaic work, after his strenuous life full of adventures by land and sea.

To-day the Casa de Pilatos seldom sees its ducal owner; its richly decorated walls and carved artesonado ceilings re-echo to the hurried steps of tourists and the patter of their guides. But the gardens have a different atmosphere. The small tiled pleasure to the south-east with its five separate divisions, and that to the north with its loggias and shady plantings, have kept their individual charm. There at any time, more particularly on a summer evening, one would hardly be surprised to see Cervantes, his host and friends, pacing again to and fro over the glistening tiled pavement that is constantly flooded to cool the air, discussing Greek philosophy, or withdrawn in the pavilion, absorbed in some fantastical romance, or listening to some tale of rare discovery in new worlds or old.

These two palaces of the Riberas, now belonging to the two first families in Spain, are the most interesting in the city after the Alcázar. But there are many others. Fine houses and patios abound in Seville, and their owners are very generous in allowing passers-by a glimpse into their charming interiors. Near the former Altamira palace, now rented out in studios, is the Thursday Market to which, from time to time, treasures that once adorned such places find their way. The Convento de la Merced, turned into the Museo Provincial, has two patios that are worth studying. With the great stairway in the colonnade between them, they make a fine setting for the collection of statuary and pictures gathered under their arches. The patio to the left has been recently restored. The original plan of sunk plots divided by tile-edged brick and earthen paths is further emphasised

ANDALUCIAN PATIOS



scale of 0 5 10 feet

Plan of Tiled Garden, Museo Provincial, Seville

by pots of flowers and box bushes set out at regular intervals.

The Director of the Museo to whose taste its present arrangement is due, has an old house of his own in what was once part of the Moorish Alcázar. And there, among family portraits and other pictures I came upon a masterpiece, one of those unexpected strokes of good fortune which are at once the desultory sightseer's lure and reward.

A set pilgrimage to see some special work of art, looked forward to and carefully planned, may disappoint the pilgrim. On such slight things does pleasure depend, so inconsequent are one's feelings that to be prepared is often to be strung up to a point whence, unhappily, it seems easiest and most natural to descend. So my unpreparedness for the beauty of the Careño portrait which shone in splendour from the dark wall of the Director's little salon no doubt added to its effect. It deepened the impression made by this masterpiece of Velazquez's favourite pupil, this surprising reincarnation of that strange Iberian Venus known as the Lady of Elché. There was no trace here of the various foreign influences that pervade Spanish painting; she was neither Italian, French nor Flemish, in spite of her Van Dyck hands, this lady with the beautiful calm face and pure rich colouring. In her black dress and delicate grey transparent ruff, with curiously designed gold embroideries and earrings, she was typical of her country, down to the Eastern detail of the sweet-scented flower she held in her slender fingers—in this case not a "nurgis," but another spring flower beloved of the poets, a hyacinth. A large white hyacinth, a perfect symbol, as it seemed to me, of Spanish art in its balanced elaboration and simplicity.

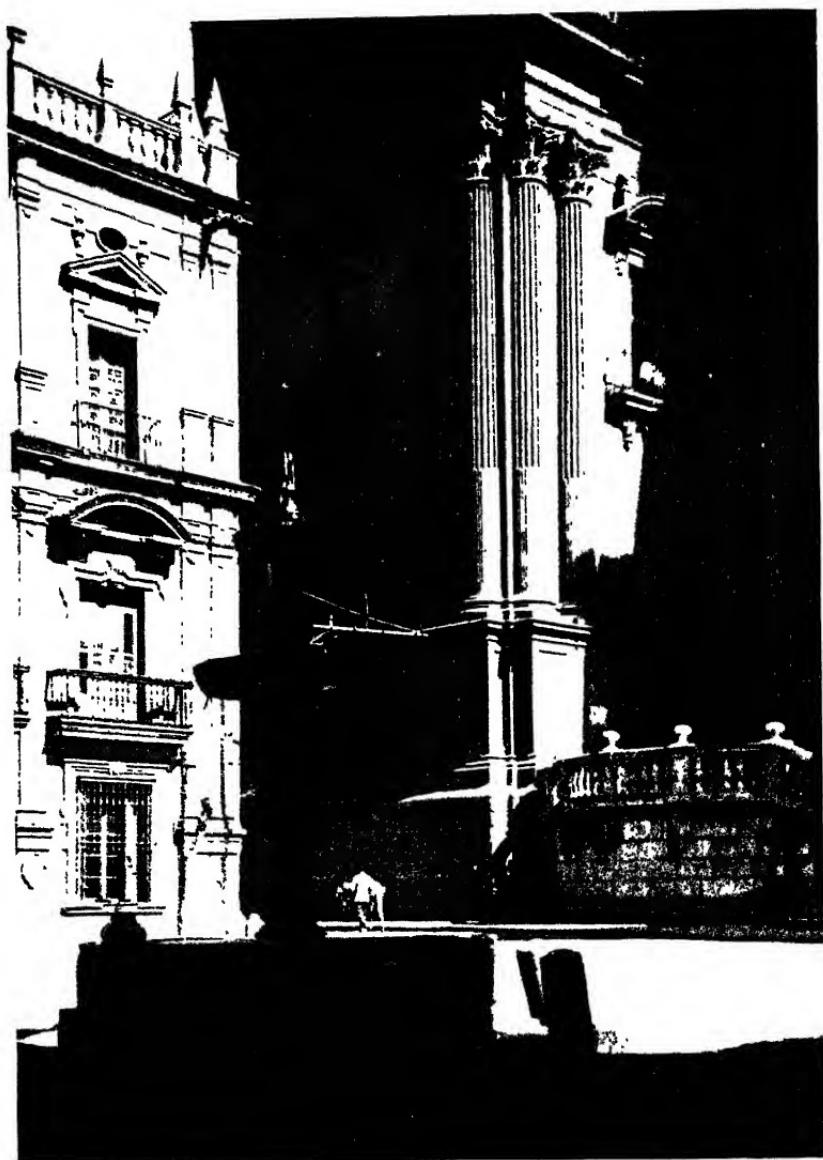
The finest private garden that has survived at Cordova is that of the Casa de los Rejas de Don Gomez. The name refers to one of the garden patios with grilled window openings into

PLATE XXXVIII



CORDOVA  
Garden Court, Casa de Don Gomez

PLATE XXXIX



FOUNTAIN AT MALAGA

## A N D A L U C I A N P A T I O S

the neighbouring street, closed at will by heavy wooden shutters. This interesting sixteenth-century house, which is beautifully kept up by its owner, the Marqués Viana, has a series of patios and a larger garden beyond them, reminiscent of the patios leading from Pedro el Cruel's Alcázar. The irregularity of the plan suggests that period, rather than the great days of Arab Cordova. The chief difference between the Viana patios and those at Seville is the absence of tile ornamentation. Instead, colour relief is obtained by painting certain details, such as the doors, shutters, piers and string-courses azure—the colour most frequently chosen at Cordova. With pale mauve heliotrope trained flat against the white walls, and bougainvillæa flaunting its purple tresses, the bright blue kalosime of the cornice, an echo of the sky above, completes a bold and perfectly successful scheme.

Where the plaster-work is very ornate, as in later Baroque buildings, this particular mode of decoration might tend to be wearisome, so the danger is avoided by reversing the order, the ground being coloured and the details left white, as can be seen at the Baroque patio of the Hospicio.

Scattered up and down Cordova there is much to interest the student of Spanish garden design. Curiously enough, it is one of the least known of old Spanish towns. In spite of the crowds that visit the Mosque, and possibly the Viana garden—if time allows and the family are not in residence—the rest of the city is *terra incognita* to the tourist. Its painfully sharp cobbled streets, the first paved in Europe after those of the Romans, too narrow most of them for wheeled traffic, discourage exploration. Even the Museo de Bellas Artes, in the palace built by the Catholic kings as a hospital, is little visited, although it has a charming garden patio with its original fifteenth-century fountain surrounded by clipped orange trees. Just outside the entrance in the street leading

down to the river is the Fountain of the Colt (*potro*), the cognizance of Cordova mentioned by Cervantes.

In this same quarter of the town, a fine old palace, fallen on evil days and inhabited by a number of poor families, has two patios with ancient marble pillars and capitals similar to those of the Mosque. In the centre of the second court stands an early fountain with a metal cover. This is the Casa de los Ríos in the Calle Agustín Moreno. Number 5, Calle Cabezas, is a private house with a number of patios dating from Moorish times. The summer dining-room has a painted ceiling and slender marble columns that support the arcade overlooking the fountain garden.

Passing into another enclosure at the back, which had evidently belonged to the women's quarters, the rich brown wooden balconies reminded me of old riverside palaces at Srinagar. At the foot of the stairway, built up against the whitewashed wall, was a long plaster flower-bed, a sort of trough, filled with tall-grown stocks, and pink and mauve opium poppies with grey-green foliage. In the half-light of the little court where the sunshine rarely penetrates, these pale-toned flowers—their fragile petals melting into a soft, shadowy background—seemed a fitting tribute to the gentle lady who once presided there, whose *harîm* garden was perhaps all she saw of outdoor life.

A cloistered garden for another order of ideas happened to be the next I visited. It belonged to the nunnery of La Victoria, and was not the usual cloister garth, but a large walled enclosure, planned in one composition with the church of the Community, the apsidal shape of the building being repeated in a platform at the upper end of the garden with a fountain in the centre and masonry seats round the curve of the wall. Brick water-channels ran down the garden paths which were shaded at the crossings by venerable cypress trees that towered above the neighbouring houses and were



PATIO GARDEN, CORDOVA



## A N D A L U C I A N P A T I O S

not dwarfed even by the huge bulk of the church behind them. With roses, iris, lilies, syringa and lilac, they maintained old traditions in planting. There were no tiles there, nothing by way of trimming but plaster and decorative brickwork, but the details of the nunnery garden were as characteristic of Moorish Spain as all the star-shaped tile fountains and bright tiled seats that invariably adorn modern renovations.

## Chapter VIII

### A PALACE OF KINGS

“ What over-looker’s evil eye did light  
On these fair gardens bright?  
And what dread poisoned desert-blast  
Of desolation drear hath past  
To wreck their order, and their beauty to the winds to cast.

*Hamid Ud-Din Abū Bakr of Balkh.*

AS, in Northern Europe, industrialism draws increasing numbers into towns, depleting the villages, improved means of transport carries those with leisure back into the country, and the unspoilt country-side grows every year more appreciated, more popular. This particular phenomenon is not yet seen in agricultural Spain. But changes of taste being more potent and far reaching than any other kind of change, even Spain begins to feel the fashionable “cult for the country.” In Italy, within recent years, many long-neglected castles have been made habitable. The mountain valleys of Piedmont are full of beautiful old fortresses where their noble owners spend the autumn months. But castles in Spain are not so readily repaired, except in our dreams. The policy of the Catholic kings, which aimed at breaking down local barriers and centralizing the country, produced an Oriental state of affairs where all the great families followed the court, and their numerous castles fell into ruins. Those few that have survived this neglect are often, like the Duke of Infantado’s splendid Castle of La Calahorra, in such inaccessible spots that it is difficult to adapt them to modern requirements. So convent buildings

in fine situations, empty since the disestablishment, are being bought and converted into country houses. Such is the case of the Convento Real de San Jeronimo, now the magnificent country house of the Marqués del Mérito.

Exact information as to the distance of San Jeronimo from Cordova being difficult to obtain, I set out blindly one afternoon, hoping the way was good. When the car stopped a few miles down the Seville road, and the driver, lifting a log barrier in the barbed-wire fence, proceeded straight over the flowery prairie making as fast as he could for the foot of the hills, I was not only jolted nearly out of my seat, but considerably surprised. The jolting increased as we took the first zig-zag of what had been meant for a road up the sierra, but which was rapidly becoming a mountain torrent full of sliding stones; for a storm, gathering darkly behind the sparsely wooded crests of the Sierra de Cordoba, now burst upon us with angry force. At any time this track with its hairpin bends would have been sufficiently alarming, but as it was, the lightning flashes and rolling thunder added to its sinister effect. Just as we turned the last bend and reached an arched gateway in the high blank wall that barred further progress, one terrific peal rang out.

Then I realized where we were, and what the immense building represented which had suddenly come into view, stretching from side to side across the ravine. This was the site of Medinat Az-Zahra, the wondrous palace of the Arab Khâlif. The ominous peal of thunder seemed the actual voice of the Moslem holy man, who, so the record says, "struck with the magnificence and size of the building, the luxuriance and excellent arrangement of the gardens, the profusion of costly ornament and gilding lavished on both, exclaimed, 'O Palace of Kings! Every house in this country has contributed to thy glory and perfection; thou in thy turn shalt afford material for every house.'"

A considerable time elapsed before admittance could be gained. The storm drowned the clang of the bell, the hoot of the motor-horn—all other sounds but its own. When at length the great gates opened, I found the entrance from the stable court led through the usual long zaguán. From there, a Renaissance patio, its small marble pillars wreathed in white jasmine, had to be crossed before the main part of the building was reached.

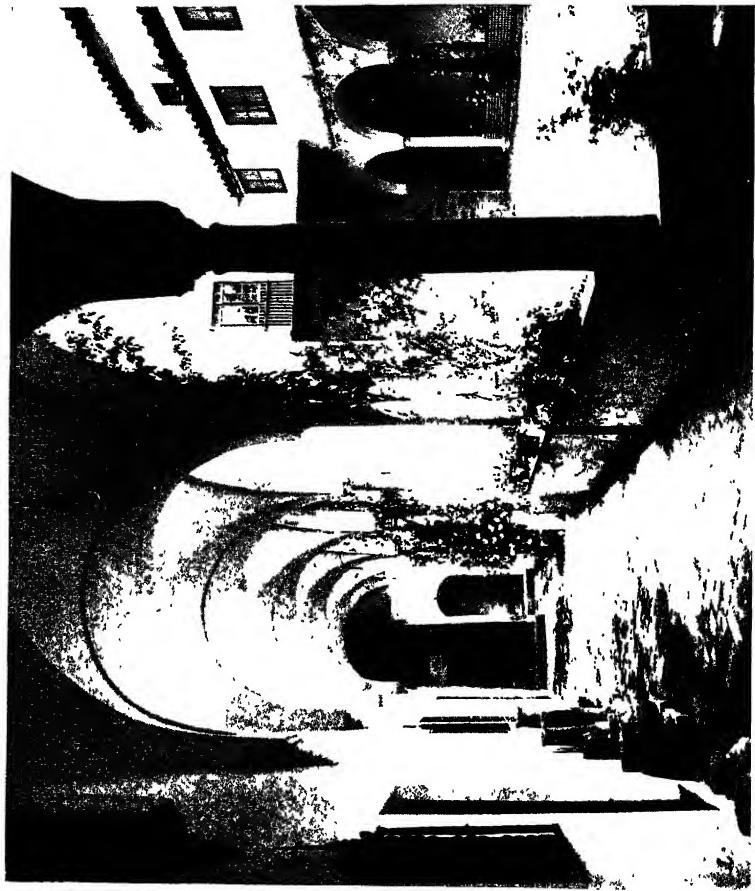
The Gothic cloisters, built in 1405, just thirty-five years after the founding of this essentially Spanish order of Heronimites—a branch of the Franciscans—were an impressive structure of two storeys. The garden in the centre had been recently restored. Surrounded by a brick and tiled pavement on which stood clipped box trees in blue pots, an octagonal fountain of four spouts was playing merrily, showing that the spring which had drawn the Arab Khâlif to this mountain home was still its chief attraction.

In the growing darkness of the stormy afternoon, the details of the beautiful old Spanish furniture which filled the lower rooms were barely distinguishable, but up some stairs on the south of the cloisters, in a large light sala that had been formed out of the galeria or raised choir of the ruined church, could be seen a remarkable series of armorial hangings in appliqué work, and gold and silver embroidery on a velvet ground. At the top of each hanging I noticed the White Horse of Cordova, the crest of Gonsalo Fernandez, the Grand Capitán, a famous ancestor of the family; below, in the quartered arms, the column of the Roman Colonnas and the balls of the Florentine Medici were conspicuous, no doubt in compliment to the hero's Italian victories. A hanging of similar work, depicting the Emperor Vitellius and the Three Fates, now in the Metropolitan Chapter of Zaragoza, came originally from the celebrated nunnery of Las Huelgas, near Burgos.

PLATE XLI



CONVENTO REAL DE SAN JERONIMO



SAN JERONIMO  
The Entrance Patio

San Jeronimo has always been a favourite spot with Spanish rulers. It was visited by the Catholic kings, and by their great-grandson, Philip II, whose room retains the austerity his choice at the Escorial would lead one to expect. Queen Isabella's apartment, on the other hand, is very stately. It is now the Marquesa's; and splendid hangings of rich blue velvet depending by ropes from the ceiling form a medieval canopy round the great carved bed. The other bedrooms of the house, extending along the east front, were originally the monks' cells, and very unusual and luxurious guest-rooms they make. Each is treated in a different colour scheme; each has its holy-water stoup at the door and dark religious picture over the bed; its ancient coffer and latticed cupboard in the wall and, at the same time, a modern bathroom and bath lined with Seville tiles, and electric light cunningly contrived to suit the general plan.

On the ground floor, at the far end of the cloisters, another huge sala, filled with old furniture and hung with splendid tapestries, occupies the centre of the Gothic buildings. Opening out of it is the vast refectory, carefully preserved in its original state. The effect of this long dining-room with its ten windows and two readers' pulpits, its polished wooden tables and benches, its tiled dado and cream walls with niches that formerly held pictures of the Franciscan saints, painted a brilliant blue, is extraordinarily fine and arresting.

And past all this magnificence, this subtle mixture of old and new luxury arranged with such taste—so surprising after its approach—I came upon a series of little rooms. With their gay chintz covers and bouquets of fresh flowers they stood ready for immediate use, and quite in keeping with old-fashioned Spanish ideas of the Master's rooms at a Cortejo.

Outside, on the terrace that ran the whole length of the building, a pergola sheltered flowers in pots, and below the

main terrace, the steep slope was treated as an orchard, the retaining walls of which held the last traces, the last few stones of what was once the famous Arab garden.

Going down the hill my former terrors of the road were forgotten. The storm clouds had lifted, a light wind was blowing their remnants in long streamers of mauve and apricot out over the plains. The prairie, as we recrossed it, sparkled with a thousand colours like a newly washed mosaic; yellow daisies with brown eyes, ultramarine anchusia and large purple bugloss formed the groundwork of the pattern that was broken by tufts of giant hawkweed—the blue wild artichoke with feathery leaves—and starred with large rose convolvulus and its lovely little sister, whose colours are sapphire with ruby stripes. All the flowers shone refreshed, even the drenched poppies, their heads trailing in the grass, glowed more brilliantly after the rain.

The curse of Medinat Az-Zahra had vanished with the storm. Everything contributed to the dream-like tranquillity of the evening scene, where herds of horses and cattle, guarded by picturesque Andalucian riders with big stirrups and high saddles, were moving down the valley. Beyond them, far in the distance, the pointed battlements of Almedóva del Rio, the Moorish fortress where Peter the Cruel kept his treasure in the high detached tower on the edge of the precipice, rose dark blue against the lemon of the clearing sky. The castle, no longer a grim menace to the countryside, is still a mark to show where the great rock on which it stands turns the Guadalquivir westward, on its journey from Cordova to Seville and the open sea.

## Chapter IX

### CLOISTER LINKS

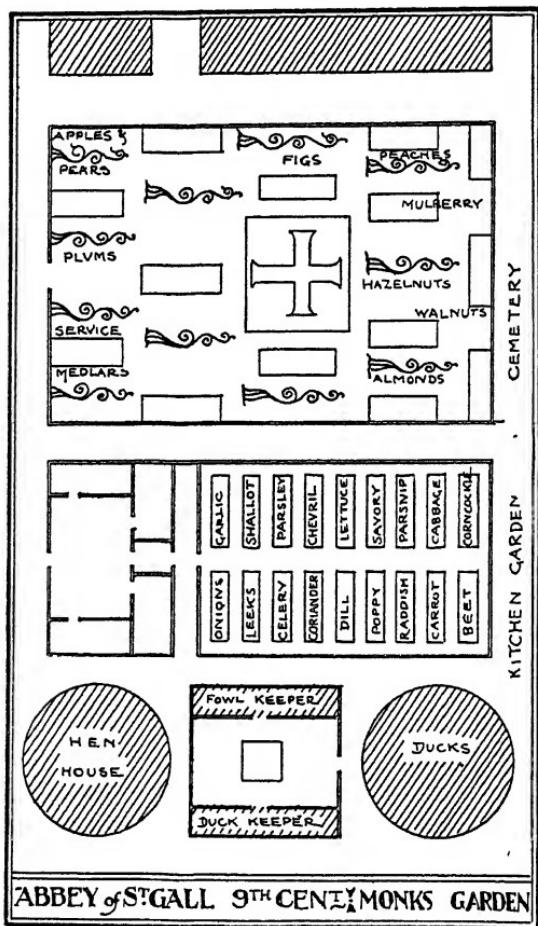
“ But let my due feet never fail  
To walk the studious cloisters pale,  
And love the high embowèd roof  
With antique pillars massy proof.” *Milton.*

WHILE the great Arab palaces maintained the continuity of garden-craft in Andalucia from the tenth century until the fall of Granada, conditions elsewhere in Europe, after the breakdown of the Roman power, were distinctly unfavourable to it. Life in undefended country houses became impossible, and there was little room for gardening in the walled towns of the dark ages or the isolated castles guarding the frontiers of the numerous principalities into which the Roman provinces dissolved. It is not the incidence of climate by itself that makes it fruitless to look for medieval gardens in Castile. During those turbulent days convents alone afforded the protection necessary for gardening and the other arts of peace.

The Hermits of St. Basil were the earliest Order, but they were an Eastern foundation. The Benedictines were the first in the West. They were founded by St. Benedict in 529, forty-one years before the birth of the Prophet whose promise of a garden-paradise inspired his Arab warriors to such reckless deeds of valour. St. Benedict seems to have been equally fond of gardens. In contrast to the visionary and meditative life that appealed to the hermits, he laid great emphasis on practical manual work as a means to the soul’s salvation. Horticulture and agriculture played an important

## S P A N I S H G A R D E N S

part in the Monastery of St. Scholastica which he founded near Subiaco. A plan of the Benedictine house of St. Gall, Switzerland, still exists. It is of extraordinary interest, for it shows how the monastery carried on the traditions of Roman



(From a drawing by H. Inigo Triggs)

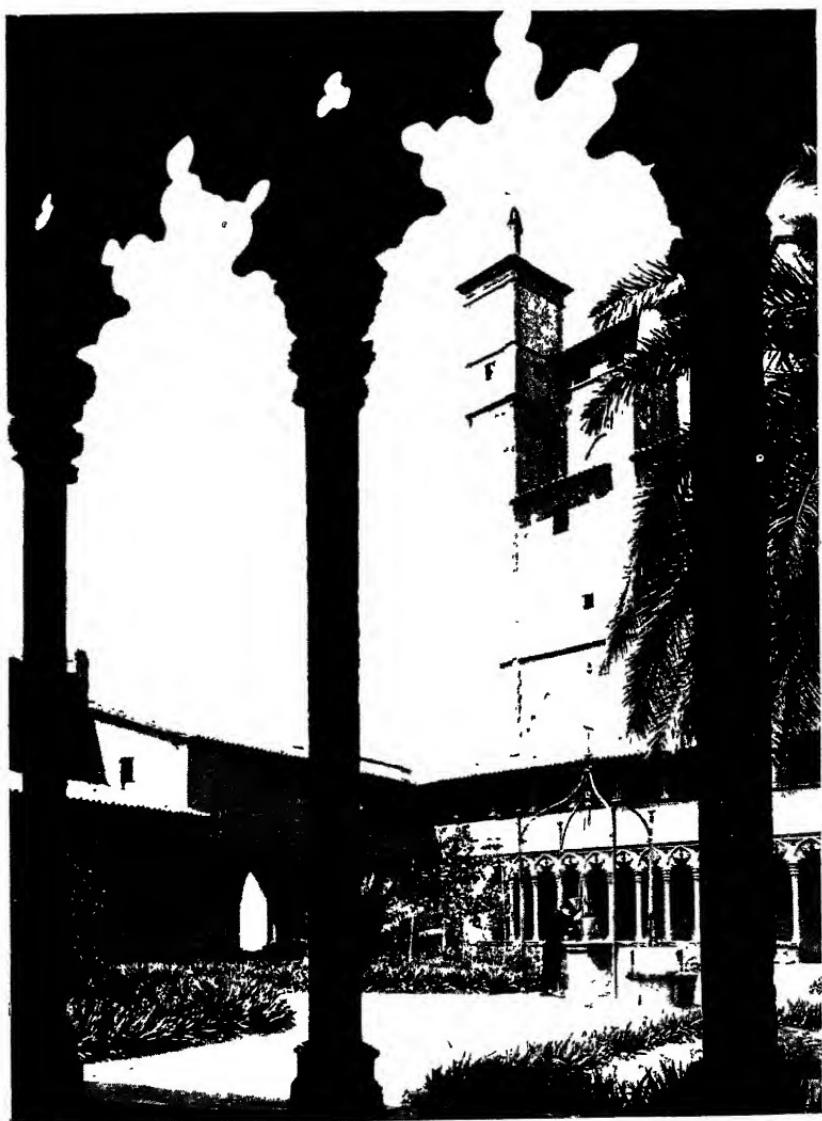
villa building. The arrangement of farm and garden-courts remained unaltered, the only new element in the design being the church, which stood on the north side of the atrium, now called the cloisters. The church was so placed that its huge bulk might not cut off the sunshine from the



CORDOVA  
The Hermitage—Cypress and Fruit Tree Motif



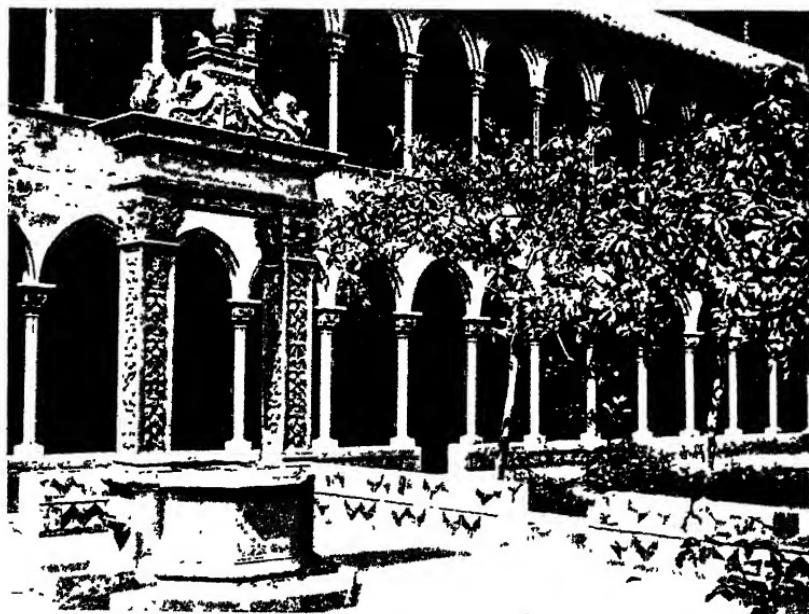
PALMA  
The Cloisters—San Francisco



PALMA  
Patio of San Francisco



PEDRALBES  
The Cloister Garden



PEDRALBES

court below, where fruit trees and sweet herbs were not the only things planted. Roses and violets and velvet-petalled coronarius, the favourite flowers for the wreaths customary at Roman banquets, were now grown with white Madonna lilies to adorn the Banquet of the Mass.

So the old gardens of the North of Spain are cloister garths, quiet places, corners where the Arabs never penetrated or else swept past on their raids into France. The Romanesque churches and monasteries of the north-west provinces are famous. Pilgrimages to the shrine of Santiago de Compostela have never ceased. But the remote churches of the Eastern Pyrenees were hardly known until recently, when they came into prominence through the wonderful collection of frescoes brought for safety to Barcelona and set up in the Museo there.

From these far-away and almost inaccessible mountain villages come a series of paintings which form the connecting link between the mosaics of Salonica and Constantinople and the altar-pieces of Cimabue. The frescoes of Augulasters and Tahull are almost identical with the fourth and fifth century mosaics of St. Pareskevi and St. Demetrius at Salonica, as I saw them before the terrible fire of 1916. The subjects are the same. There is the same pre-occupation with the strange world of Revelations that haunted men's minds when the end of the world they knew was hourly expected, and seemed indeed the logical sequence to the death of Roman civilization—the power of Heaven superseding the power of Earth. The winged beasts encircling the central figure of the dome, the tall majestic prophets and apostles standing in rows between the loophole windows, the vines and lotus flowers twining under the arches of the colonnades—the very details of the mosaic colouring—are faithfully repeated in the paintings of the Pyrenees.

When the Moslem thrust had spent its force, and the

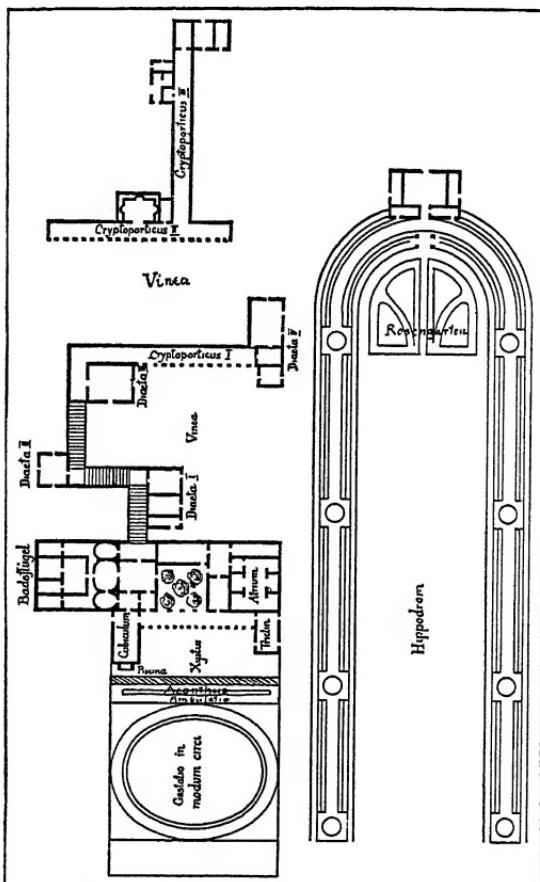
gradual recovery of the Peninsula by the Christians commenced, one of the first large convents built was the Benedictine Abbey of Ripoll. It was founded by Wilfred the Shaggy, in 877. The basilica, a magnificent Romanesque structure, formed the mausoleum of the Counts of Barcelona from the ninth to the twelfth century. The beautiful cloisters supported by columns of Gerona marble, greyish pink in hue, were added in 1172. St. Pablo del Campo, the oldest parish church in Barcelona, originally outside the walls as its name implies, was one of the next foundations of the Benedictines. It was built by Wilfred II in 914. Again the cloisters are later in date than the church. They are quite small but particularly charming, with their coupled shafts and cusped arches marking the transition from Romanesque to Moorish styles.

The best known of all the Benedictine foundations in Catalonia is the Monastery of Montserrat, commenced in 976; but it seems probable that there was a settlement there before the incursion of the Moors. This curious rock formation rising abruptly from the plain, looking for all the world like a colossal many-pinnacled castle, was called, in the Middle Ages, Montsalvat (the Mountain of Salvation), and there was located the long-sought castle of the Holy Grail.

An off-shoot of the Benedictine Order, the Cluniacs, built many splendid monasteries in Spain; but as they abolished manual labour for the monks, they were not particularly interested in gardens. On the other hand, the sites they chose were often very beautiful. It was an Abbot of Cluny who was summoned by William the Conqueror to come over from Normandy and govern the English monasteries. Lewes in Sussex, and Castleacre in Norfolk, are two of his best-known foundations.

The Austin Canons, or Augustines, who followed the Cluniacs into Spain, built a wonderful monastery garden at

their Abbey of Roncesvalles. It stands at the entrance to the famous pass of that name, the pass by which the northern tribes found their way south through the mountain barrier; and where Charlemagne's rearguard was defeated coming



Plan of the Younger Pliny's Villa Tusci

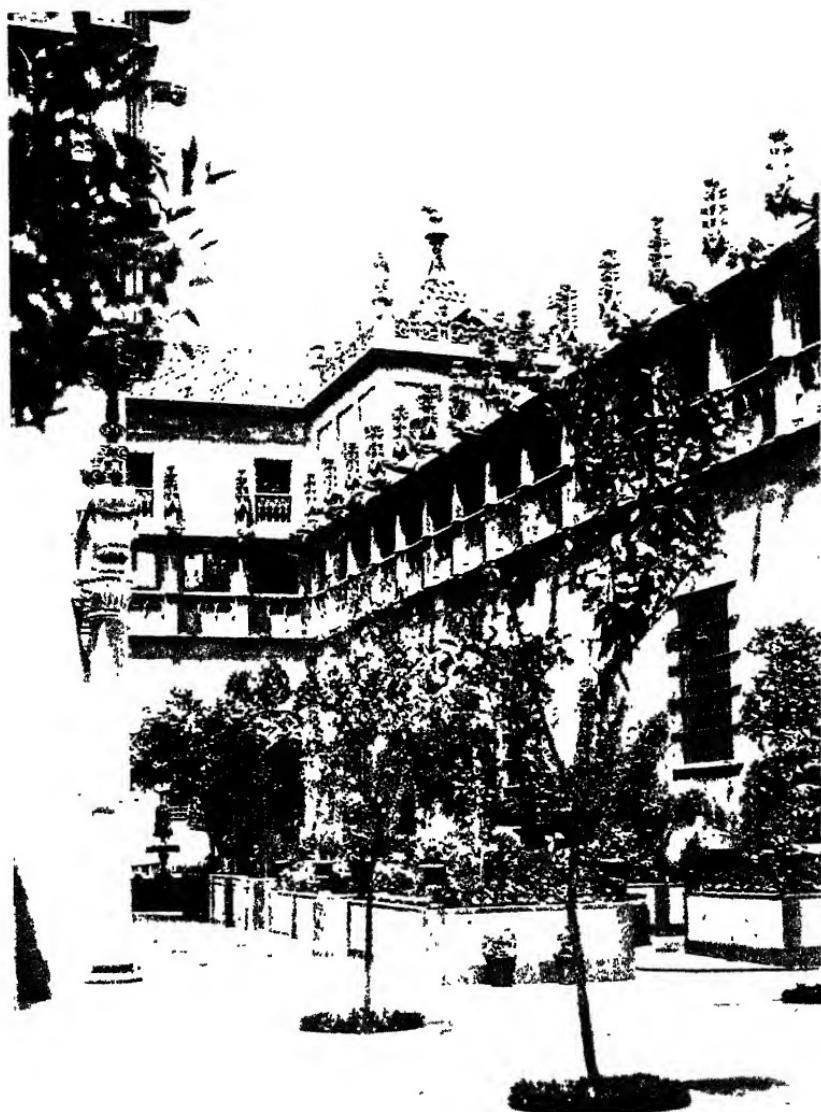
back from Saragoza on that day of tragedy recorded in the "Chanson de Geste," when Roland blew his horn too late.

The members of the Carthusian Order were vowed to solitude and silence, so they were the first to alter the Roman villa plan, as a separate cell and little garden were required

for each monk. But they kept to the arrangement of a central cloister round which the individual cells were usually grouped. There is a beautiful Gothic Cartuja at Jerez with an abandoned cloister where the cypress trees that once sheltered the monks at their studies now shade the grazing donkeys and mules. In the seventeenth century there seems to have been a remarkable revival of this Order, for many of the best-known Cartujas, such as those at Granada and Valldemosa, have magnificently rich Baroque buildings.

The great gardeners among the early Orders were the Cistercians. Their founder, St. Bernard, encouraged agriculture and horticulture, and their monasteries were generally built beside rivers for the purpose of irrigation. It was they who changed the well from its traditional spot in the centre of the cloisters and placed it in the corner next to the refectory door, for the better convenience of washing work-soiled hands before meals. St. Bernard also discouraged the popular taste for figure sculpture, no doubt fearing a return of idolatry, so that even the architectural decoration of his monasteries displayed his fondness for plants and flowers. The beautiful cloisters of Poblet el Santo, beyond Tarragona, are well known, as this Cistercian abbey was the burying-place of Jaime I, conqueror of Majorca and his successors.

The two knightly Orders of Hospitallers and Templars followed closely on the Cistercians. But as their special work lay in the East, at the centre of the Crusades, their buildings are not very noticeable in Spain. At Hospitalet, on the sea-coast, ten miles from Tarragona, the Order of that name kept up a resting-place for pilgrims. The Templars, after two hundred years of service, fell on evil days and were suppressed with great cruelty in 1307. The Hospitallers, the Knights of St. John, were more fortunate. After being driven out of their stronghold at Rhodes by Suliman the Magnificent, the Grand Master of the day, Philip de Villiers, of Isle



BARCELONA  
Patio de los Naranjos—Palacio de la Audiencia

PLATE XLVIII



JEREZ  
The Cloisters

d'Adam, was presented by Charles V with the Island of Malta. The Villiers arms can still be seen over the gate of the Grand Master's palace at Valetta. There he died in 1534. But the Order continued and held the island until it was taken by Napoleon in 1798.

The coming of the Friars left its architectural mark on Spain. South of the Pyrenees, as south of the Alps, climate and personal taste inclined men to prefer a classical style of building; the Roman and Romanesque would merge imperceptibly into the Renaissance in many a southern city were it not for the two tall Gothic spires, the standing witness to the fact that the Friars, brown and black, Franciscan and Dominican, had passed that way.

Two churches belonging to the Franciscan Order, one in Majorca and one on the mainland of Catalonia, have particularly beautiful cloister gardens. These are St. Francisco at Palma, and the Convento Real de Pedralbes just outside Barcelona. The former was founded as a monastery in 1281; the latter was built and endowed by Doña Elisenda de Moncada, wife of Don Jaime II, as a convent for noble ladies.

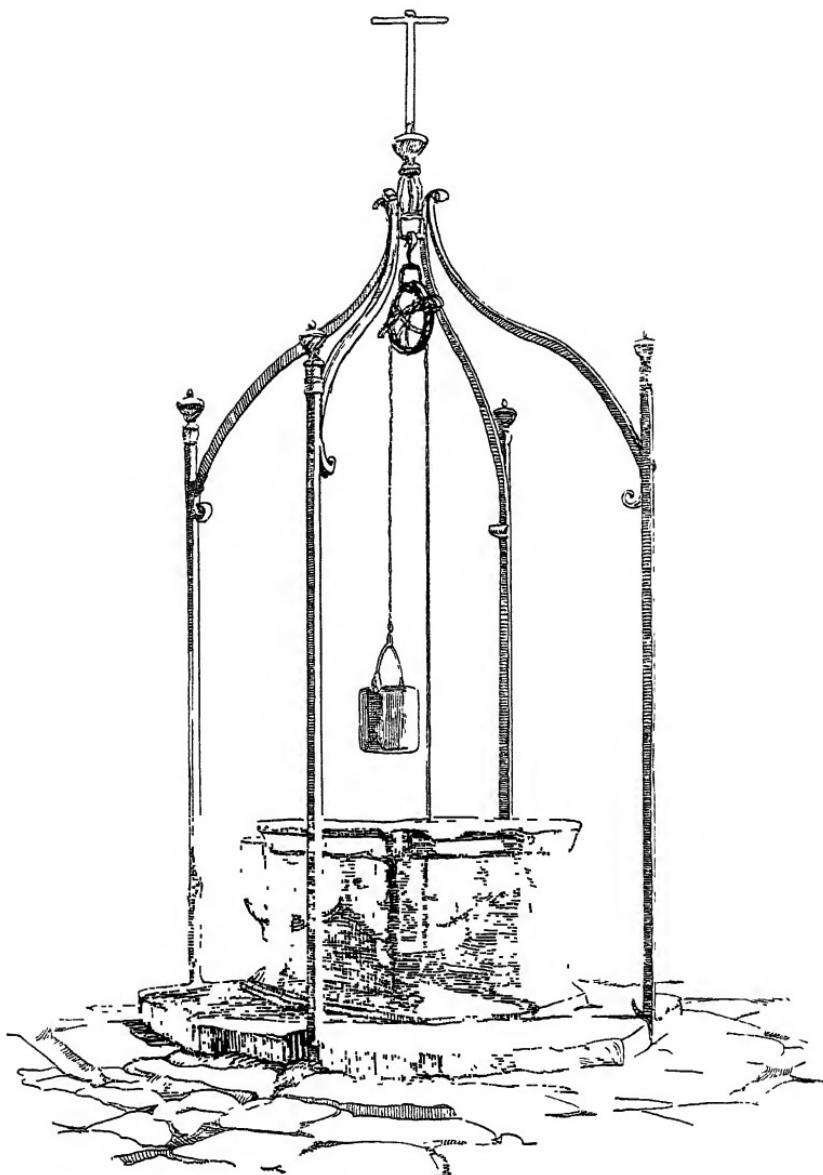
The Franciscan church at Palma is a very fine building, and contains the tomb of the martyr mystic, Ramon Lull. It is famous, also, in another and sinister way, as the scene of an extraordinary outburst of passion, the culmination of one of those bitter feuds between rival families which not even the Holy Church, powerful as it was, could quell. On the first of November 1490, during the singing of the Mass, through some accident or provocation, swords were drawn. The followers of the two factions attacked each other furiously; before the fight was done it is on record that three hundred of the congregation lay dead or wounded on the stone floor of the nave. Even now, after more than 400 years have passed, something in the church's grim brooding aspect keeps alive the memory of that terrible All Saints' Day.

With a curious feeling of escape I passed through the little door to the right of the high altar that leads out into the cloisters. The springing grace of the lofty colonnade surrounding the large garth gave an actual sense of physical and spiritual relief. The dark medieval world of martyrs and strange monsters, of pious ardours and evil passions—alike in their fierce intensity—seemed left behind, incredibly remote, as I watched the sunlight play on the geranium-beds and flicker fitfully through the golden-green lemon trees that, planted in traditional style, cast a light shade at the corners of the square. The cloisters were deserted but for two aged monks seated at the end of one of the galleries, intent on giving a layman instruction of some sort. The drone of their voices rose and fell soothingly on the afternoon air, broken only by an occasional clink and splash from the copper bucket at the central well. And from high above this peaceful garden scene came the faint dry rustle of the palm leaves as they swayed perpetually in the wind from the harbour; behind the palms soared the Gothic bell-tower, every detail of its crisp stonework clear-cut against the azure of the sky.

In contrast to these easily accessible cloisters, well known to those who visit Palma, is the still more beautiful cloister garden of the nuns at Pedralbes. Here admittance cannot be gained. But there are rare exceptions; thanks to the courtesy of the Papal Nuncio at Madrid, I was most kindly received and shown its treasures by the Reverend Mother Abbess.

To enter a closed convent such as Pedralbes was a formidable affair. First the letter of permission had to be presented at the great gates. A bell was rung, a little shutter opened, the revolving cupboard—from behind which a doubting voice came—with a swift turn on its axis, swallowed up the precious paper and cards, and I felt that all was lost; the

CLOISTER LINKS



The Cloister Well, San Francisco, Palma

longed-for garden with its wonderful tiles would remain a tantalizing mystery.

After a prolonged pause, back came the voice. This time more friendly, even frankly astonished. The letter was returned and a day and time fixed for such a startling event as receiving a member of the outer world.

Even so, these were not all the formalities. On my return another day at the given time, the voice, by now an old acquaintance, directed me carefully up some steps to a small building over the chaplain's quarters at the left of the main gate. Here, in a room set apart for the reception of relatives, behind two thick rejas, one of iron and one of wood, through which, as a cousin of a nun had previously told me, it is just possible to touch the tips of their extended fingers, sat the heavily veiled Mother Abbess. After her inspection and a short and rather nervous conversation, both of which I supposed were satisfactory, I was returned to the entrance porch. I found the Chaplain of the Order waiting for me, and as I approached up the steps, rusty bolts were drawn back, the key turned in the huge lock with a grinding sound, and the big gates, the only communication with the outer world, swung open reluctantly on their disused hinges.

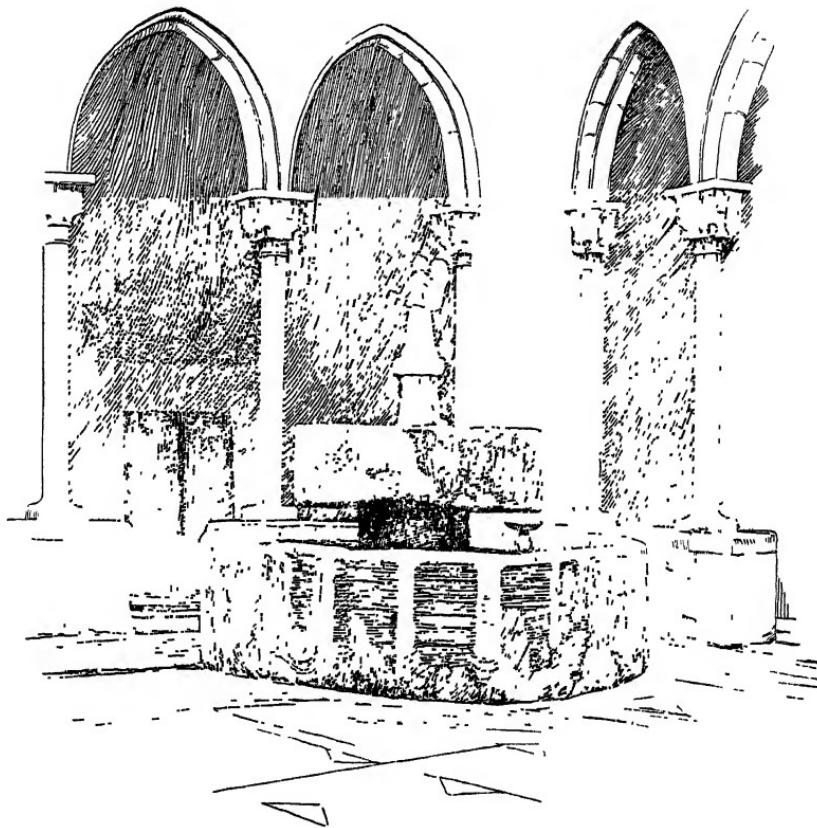
Standing at the head of a number of her senior nuns, the Rev. Mother Abbess gave me a formal but benevolent welcome. And behind the line of shrouded figures, black veils thrown over their brown habits disguising their faces, shone and sparkled the garden I had come to see. For the great doors opened directly into the south-west corner of the cloisters.

But "seeing the garden" was the last thing of which the Rev. Mother Abbess thought. So we proceeded to her little parlour with its unique Giotto-like frescoes painted by Ferrer Bassa in 1346. Then, as was only fitting, we visited the tomb of the pious foundress, Doña Elisenda de Moncada.

Her beautiful tomb is in duplicate; one we saw in an arch of the cloisters for her nuns, another just like it at the other side of the wall in the convent church for the general public. After that came the church itself, or rather the high choir where the community sit. The chapter house, with its pictures of the Franciscan saints, was next shown. There I happened to notice that a miniature of their Patron Saint was worn by all the Sisters; a charming blue and grey seascape with St. Clara standing up in her tiny missionary craft as it touched the shores of Spain.

The convent museum was reached through a bare hall on an upper storey, with brick loophole windows giving a marvellous view of the Bay of Barcelona, with the city spread out on its shores. A wide new road through the suburbs seemed to lead direct from the sea to the very foot of the convent walls; but so far below that its motors were noiseless and looked no larger than beetles glittering in the sun. All kinds of treasures filled the little museum: reliquaries, altar-pieces, furniture. There I was shown a painted chair—said to be contemporary with the foundation—low and broad with fat bulbous legs, almost identical in shape and colouring with the chair of state included in the trousseau of a Punjab bride to-day. There were many more religious pictures, and among them a beautiful tiled altar-piece so heavy that the Sisters, having got it up there, had never succeeded in lifting it into position over an altar, but had left it lying on the floor. On this same high level a large chapel had electric lights burning brightly in front of its shrines—electric light being the one concession made at Pedralbes to modern ways of living. In the vast refectory, each Sister's place at the long narrow tables running round the wall was set with two earthenware bowls, one for eating and one for drinking, a tiny cruse of oil and vinegar, and a beaker of wine, just as it had been since the community started. Immediately outside

the refectory in the angle of the cloisters, conveniently placed for washing before meals, stood the chateau d'eau, the original fourteenth-century fountain in three tiers.



The Château d'eau, Pedralbes

The last rays of the June sun were already burnishing the dark cypress tops and gilding the slender columns of the upper cloisters by the time the tour was done. But the green, shadowy garden, with the fountain playing under the orange and loquart trees, looked cool and inviting. The old tiled benches that form a large open-air room round the arch of the Renaissance well-head, reflecting the evening sky in

C L O I S T E R   L I N K S

their amber, blue and gold, seemed an ideal place in which to rest and meditate, wrapped in the quietude that lay like a spell on all things within the fortress walls. The magic of water, flowers and trees, the appeal of fine architecture, the solace of a far-distant view—what of external joys can the heart desire more. “Venice by moonlight is not as lovely as our Pedralbes,” murmured an Austrian nun who had come up softly behind me.

## Chapter X

### MAJORCA: MOORISH SITES

“White founts falling in the courts of the sun,  
The Soldan of Byzantium is smiling as they run.

And the Pope has cast his arms abroad for agony and loss,  
And called the Kings of Christendom for swords about the Cross.”

*G. K. Chesterton.*

THE Island of Majorca was wrested from the Moors in the year 1229 by Don Jaime I, Count of Barcelona and King of Arragon. With his twelve companion knights, their supporters and followers to the number of 15,000, he surprised and took one of the fairest possessions of the Moors in Europe. It was a remarkable feat of arms, the more so when we consider the youth of the leader, Don Jaime being only twenty at the time.

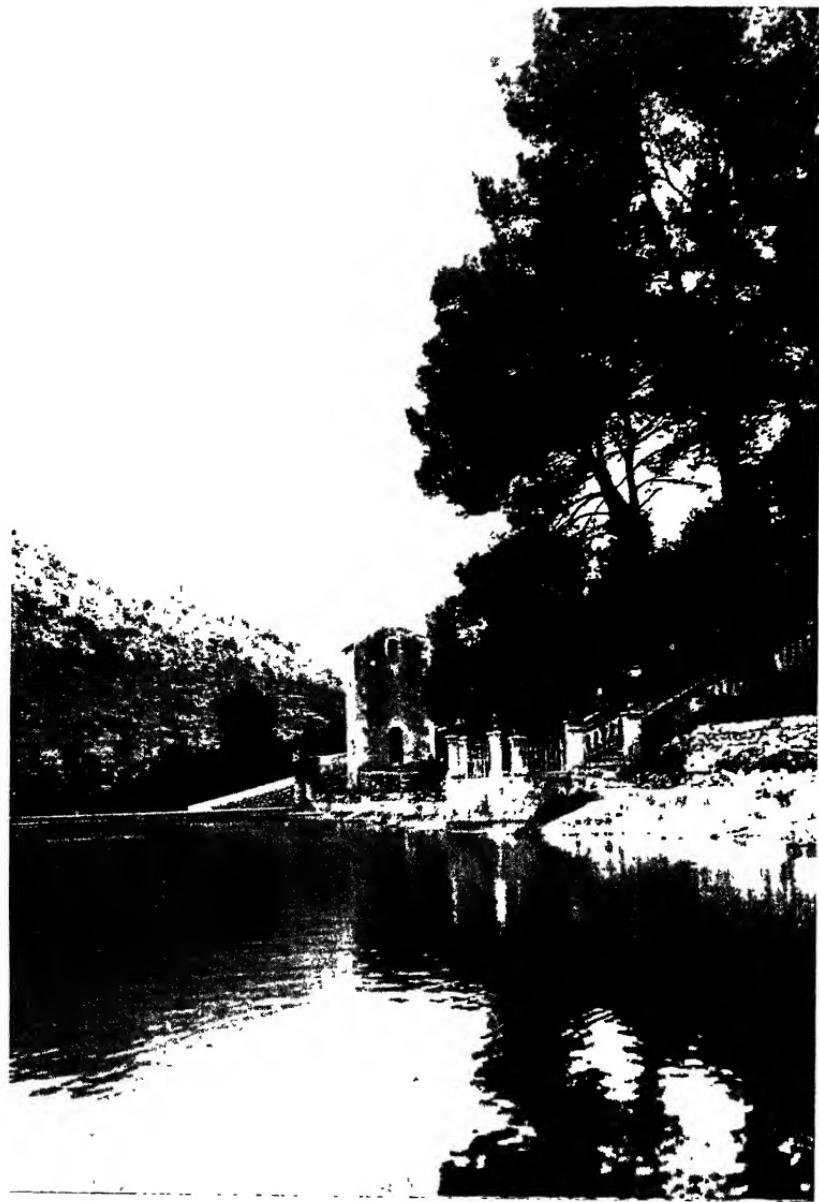
The epic story of this crusade has sunk deep in the island memory. It has stamped the outlook of the inhabitants and the character of their dwellings with a fixity almost unknown elsewhere. Since the conquest estates have passed down from hand to hand in the same twelve knightly families, and people, customs, houses—even furniture—have remained essentially untouched by changes in the world beyond home waters.

The natural beauty of the scenery provides a marvellous setting for the “sons,” as the Majorcan manors are called. The finest are nearly all situated well inland away from the pirate raids, with a mountain range at their back, and at their feet mile upon mile of olive and almond groves, over

PLATE XLIX

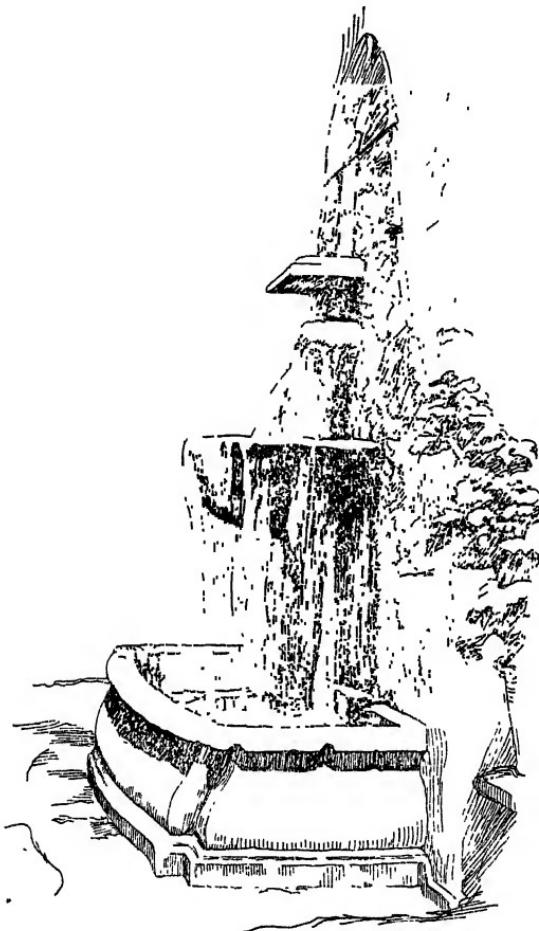


ALFABIA



RAXA  
The Irrigation Pool

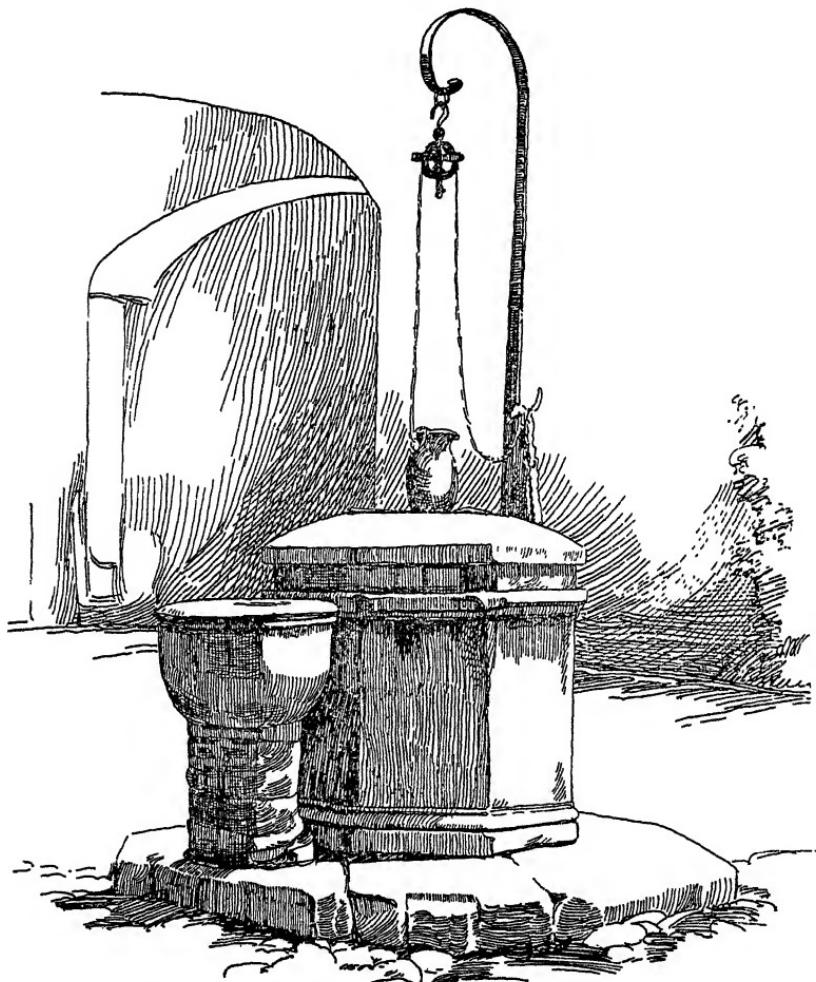
which, far in the distance, can just be seen the towers and spires of Palma. And if added to these attractions, the "son" can boast a spring of running water, it is sure to be based on an old Moorish site.



Baroque Wall Fountain, Alfabia

The country seat of the Moorish Governor was at Alfabia, in a fold of the hills on the Palma-Soller road. The present manor house, approached by a lovely avenue of planes, conceals behind its Baroque fronton a Moorish vestibule with

long stone seats and a painted ceiling. The house and patio beyond, in a mixture of styles, are not particularly attractive, but turning to the left and continuing up the hill, another



Courtyard Fountain, Son Raxa

Baroque façade will be seen, shutting off the old harîm garden. The ladies' swimming-pool, a stone-vaulted reservoir, now forms part of the seventeenth-century scheme, balanced



RAXA  
“One of the Eight Narrow Terraces”



RAXA

“Masks through which the Water Gushes”

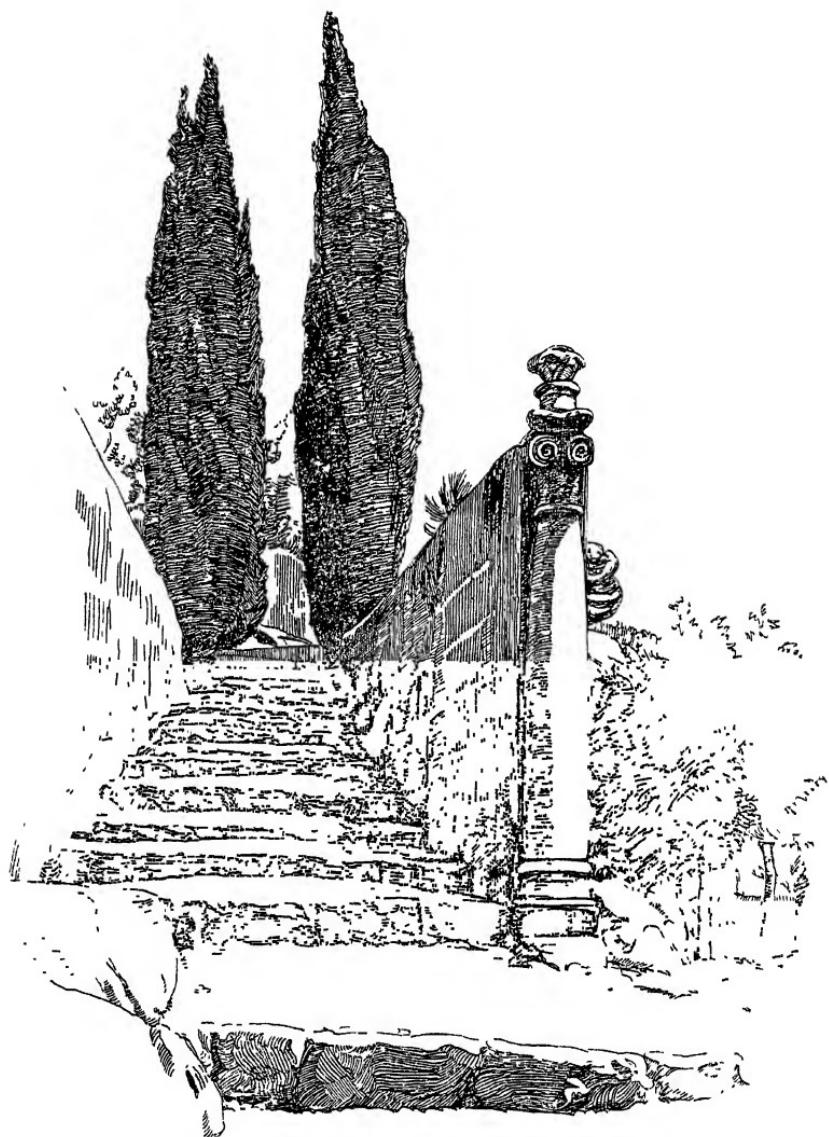
on the opposite side by an ornamental dovecote. In the centre is one of the charming wall fountains typical of that period.

The garden is planned in the traditional eight terraces of the Moslem paradise, some of which retain a cut-stone edging. But its chief feature is the vine pergola down the centre of the enclosure supported on octagonal stone pillars. Its ornamental pebble paving, such as are seen in old carmens at Granada, is kept cool and fresh on the hottest day of summer by little fountain-jets that spray the walk from stone vases standing on the low parapet wall on either side, much in the same way as the fountains at the Generalife play from the flower-beds into the long canal.

The Moorish name for a manor is "alqueria," and at the bottom of the hill returning towards Palma a "son" called S'Auqueria reminds one of the fact.

Further down the main road a by-path leads to the celebrated Raxa, another Moorish garden. This place was given at the conquest to the Sacristan of Gerona as a reward for his zeal in furnishing thirty men-at-arms for Don Jaime's crusade. From him it passed to the Sa-Forteza family, and then went by marriage to the Despuigs. It was a Cardinal Despuig, returning laden with classical treasures after a long residence in Rome, who gave the garden its present form in the late eighteenth century. As was always the case, for reasons of privacy, the old harîm enclosure lay above the house; and up the centre of its eight narrow terraces the Cardinal made a grandiose stone stairway worthy of the Moslem paradise itself. Small classical figures and urns set at intervals on the side walls, and leonine masks through which the water gushes, would persuade the casual visitor that this was only an Italian garden in a Spanish setting. But the dark over-arching Aleppo pines, and the azul iris, know better. The water, now diverted into little irrigation channels behind the parapet, was splashing merrily down the terraces,

SPANISH GARDENS



The Cypress Steps, Raxa

supplying fountains in the main building and feeding the orange-groves below, long before this lovely place fell to the Sacristan's share.

Another magnificent stairway leads up to Canet, the

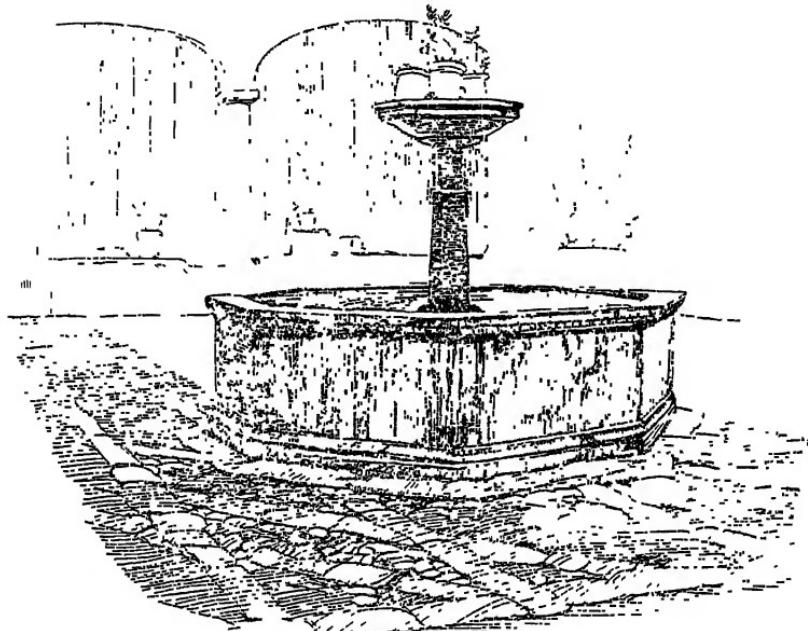
“son” of the Torella family. But the spring for which the manor is famed rises in a different part of the grounds. Bernard de Santa Eugenia de Torella, an ancestor of the present owner, was the first Christian governor of Majorca. He won this distinction through his defence of the Canet spring, for it was well known in Moorish times, and near it the army of Don Jaime had pitched their camp before the taking of the capital. One night a party of Moors trying to cut off the water-supply were surprised and routed by the Conde de Rousillon and his companion, Don Bernard de Torella, who was promptly rewarded for his vigilance by the gift of Canet and the Governorship.

In course of time other properties accrued to this powerful family. A “son” bearing their name has a fine old manor house with a two-storied arcade round the patio. This remarkably picturesque building stands in the foothills beyond the little town of Santa Maria.

As a country house I found it fallen in the world. Donkeys were stabled under the big entrance arch, cooking-pots and pans littered the decorative stone pavements of the patio, pumpkins stood in ripening rows on the balustrade of the upper galleries, and arcas from the great sala, once the pride of successive Torella brides, were put to farm uses and now held noting more precious than grain for the fowls. In an empty room I passed through I noticed two beautiful old chests suffering from this rough treatment, one typically Majorcan, and one of Moorish carpentry.

The fifteenth-century fountain still played in the patio, and opening out of the ground-floor colonnade were vast dusty halls filled with wine and olive presses which served their original purposes at the proper seasons of the year. But the chapel under the main staircase was no longer in use, and its lovely Renaissance altar-piece looked sad and neglected without its flowers and lamps. Just outside the entrance a

little enclosed garden led down to the stream. Here, too, the flowers had gone; rows of carefully irrigated vegetables had taken their place. Nothing remained of the former lay-out except one huge cypress at the gate, venerable enough to have witnessed the building of Son Torella.



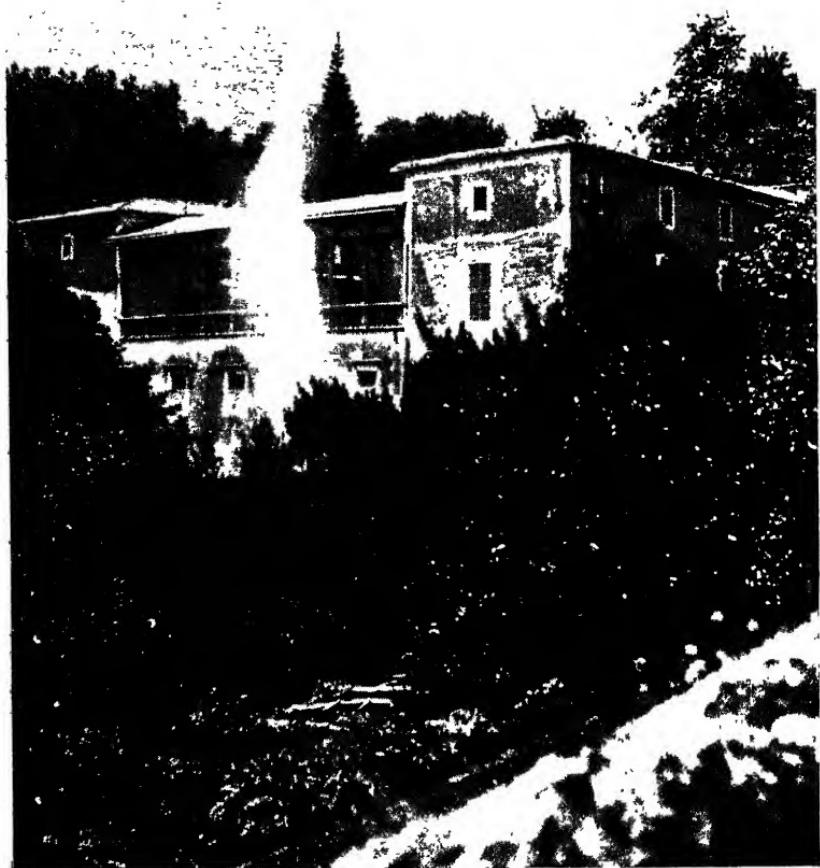
Courtyard Fountain, Son Torella

*La Granja de Fortuny* in the narrow valley above Esporlas is reputed to be the oldest of the "sons." At the conquest the estate was made over to the Benedictines, but was sold by them to a private family in the year 1447. Its courtyard fountain basin, single-run outside staircase, and the beautiful open loggia forming a gallery on the south side of the quadrangle, appear to have been constructed about this time.

The garden, following the original Moorish plan, is divided into two parts, one immediately below the main building for the general use of the owner and his guests, and one at the back on a higher level, only entered through the



"ANOTHER MAGNIFICENT GATEWAY LEADS UP TO CANET"



LA GRANJA DE FORTUNY  
“When the Water is Turned On”

house, reserved for the ladies of the family. In this little garden, which has been much altered some time during the nineteenth century, a winding walk leads to a glorieta of stone pillars with a stone table in the centre. Tiny jets sprout out of the ground on all sides of this summer dining-room to cool the air on hot nights after the Moorish fashion. There is too, a distinct resemblance to a Mughal garden chaddar in the narrow waterfall which plunges down the cliff close to the windows of the house. When Sir John Carr dined there in 1809 he noted in his diary that in the centre of the garden opening off the Comedor "there were waterworks playing in all sorts of fantastic shapes."

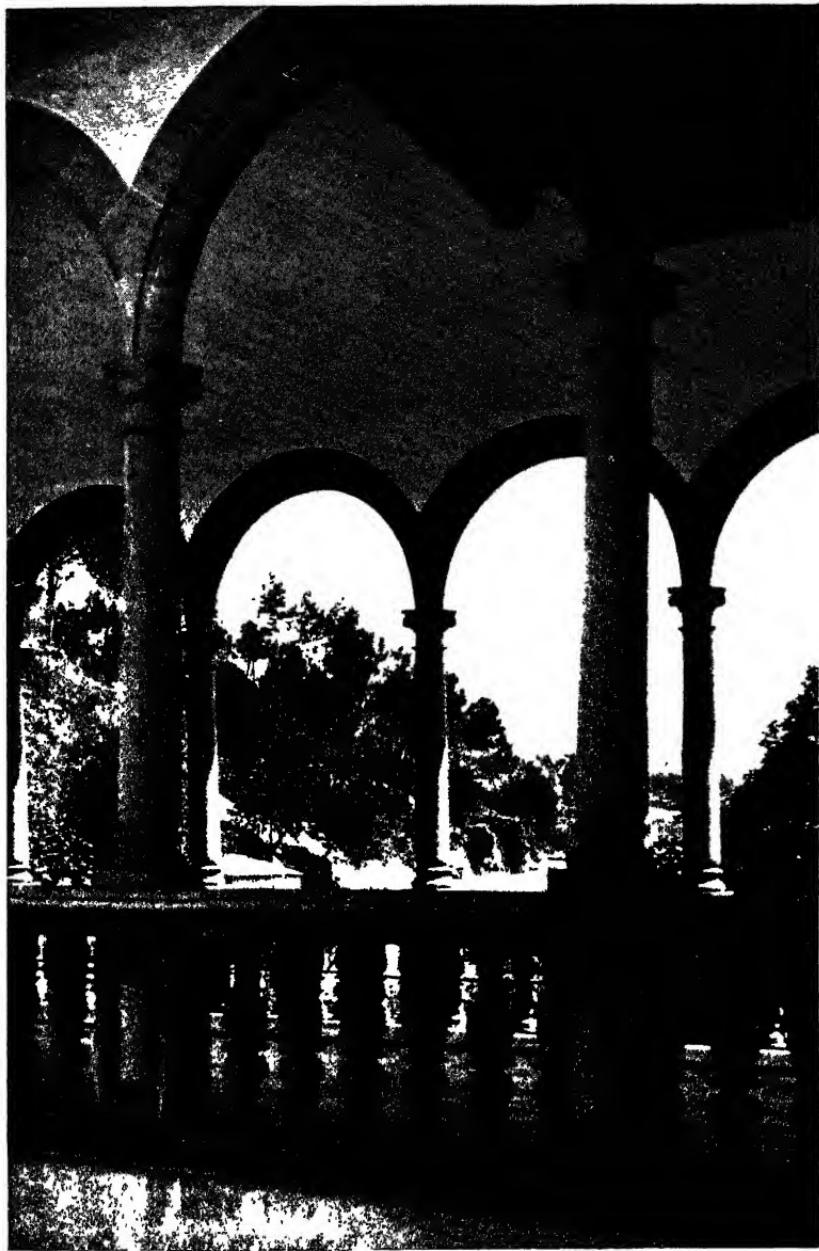
Down in the south garden, flanked on the side towards the road by a long stone-pillared pergola, a pool with a great fountain forms the principal feature. Until the fountain plays it is almost lost in the luxuriant growth of the surrounding orange-grove. But when the water is turned on it rises to a surprising height. The last impression as one leaves the "son" is this white plume of water waving high above the pine woods, the arches of the lovely open loggia in the background half obscured with spray.

The waterfall at La Granja has been captured and woven into the garden scheme, but the one which gives the Moorish name of El Salt (the Leap) to Son Forteza is quite untameable. After a storm it jumps the rugged precipice at the head of a ravine near Puigpuñent, and falls with such force that it has to be carried away in a deep masonry channel—a channel which divides the garden at the foot of the cliffs. But this romantic ravine garden, showing obvious traces of Moorish work, is surpassed in interest by the house and its setting, crowning a great series of stone terraces just where the ravine broadens out into the valley.

The huge square building with its bastion-like walls, the severity of its surface only broken by light iron balconies,

may be taken as a typical Majorcan country house—half fortress and half farm. There are no graceful loggias, no suggestion of Italian influence here, nor even that of the Spanish mainland. No hint of rich decoration breaks the austerity. Only a fountain standing on the upper terrace adds its grateful coolness to the green shade of the planes. Inside the courtyard the effect is equally unbending. On the left, overlooking the valley, a plain outside staircase leads to the fifteenth-century rooms of the family. Facing them is the oldest part of the building now given over to the amo and the madona, as the farm manager and his wife are called.

I was fortunate in being shown round the “son” by its owner, the head of the Villalonga family, who was in residence there rather early in the year. The charming interior proved equally characteristic in planning and furnishing. The great sala, the state-room of the house, with windows at each end, had its old Majorcan mulberry-wood table with decorative iron supports in the centre, and magnificent cabinets, beautiful high-backed chairs and bridal arcas, each on a red dais, set round the walls. At the south windows, looking down on the upper terrace garden, stood smaller tables encircled by chairs placed ready for the long discussions of a country where the art of conversation and recitation is thoroughly understood, for it takes the place of much reading of books. The children’s window, complete with tiny table, chairs, and cabinets suited to the size of the little ones, is a happy feature of a Majorcan home that might well be copied elsewhere. On the right of the sala, the master’s room reminded one of similar rooms in old English country houses in its mixture of sporting trophies and books, business papers and guns. The ladies’ sitting-room on the left had lovely green lacquer furniture including a tall clock in a Majorcan case of hour-glass shape that would have aroused the envy of any connoisseur—not to mention the paintings, a series of female



LA GRANJA DE FORTUNY  
“The Beautiful Open Loggia”



SON FORTEZA  
“ A Fountain Standing on the Upper Terrace ”

saints by Zubarán in his later manner. As usual in Majorca, where country neighbours are few and far between, the comedor (dining-room) was quite moderate in size, and, following as island custom, in place of pictures, its walls were hung with platters of exquisite old Majolica.

But attractive as this side of the house may be, the madona's kitchen is the sight of Son Forteza. If the charm of the present living-rooms depends on their beautiful simplicity, on the absence of anything ugly or extraneous, across the way life is reduced to its barest elements with extraordinary effect. To enter there is to see before one's eyes how the knight and his lady lived who first owned Son Forteza.

This kitchen is the largest in the island, and that is saying a good deal. We approached it through an ante-room resembling a church porch with stone seats along the walls and rows of pegs above for hanging up cloaks. A few steps ascended to the vast kitchen-hall where the hooded fireplace occupied a third of the space. Round the circular hearthstone let into the floor, on which, although it was the month of May, a large branch of a tree was burning, ran a plaster seat with sheep-skins for cushions, that could accommodate fifty people easily. A huge wooden table and benches, a few tall chairs of a slightly later period, copper pots and pans of all shapes and sizes made up the sum of the furnishing. The walls were bare, except for the figure of a Patron saint in a little niche. There was no clock to strike the hours, only the bell rung at sunset calling the staff of forty, who gather there to sing the Rosary before the evening meal.

As I was leaving Son Forteza, we stopped to see the chapel under the entrance arch. It had been built at the same time as the main part of the house and contained a magnificent retablo, with a Villonga donor in ruff praying in a corner of the central panel. This altar-piece, so my hostess told me, had

been regilded four generations ago, a pious ancestress having left by will sufficient gold coins for that purpose. Shining brilliantly in the evening light which streamed through the open door behind us, above an altar decked for the Mass with all the splendour of the Roman ritual, with delicately rich silk embroideries and lace, elaborately chased lamps and candlesticks, and gold vases filled with heavily perfumed lilies, it brought out the vivid contrasts of the Forteza patio: on one side the Renaissance house to which the chapel belonged, with every luxury then known and a beauty rare in any century; on the other the madona's kitchen, with its bare essentials, only the germ of later things—for the complicated mechanism of the lacquer clock, the bell to ring the sunrise and sunset, for the Baroque grandeur of the family chapel, the little saint in the niche.

One more old country place must not be forgotten in any list of Moorish sites. It lies high under the north shoulder of the mountains behind El Terreno, the western suburb of Palma. Turning its back on the reconquered island, the tall house looks wistfully out towards the sea. It is a fine building with decorative arches for bells at each end of the roof, and a terraced garden leading off the second storey. The date on the disused chapel is 1625. But the huge masonry water-tank dug out of the hillside, and the big ladroner tree surrounded by a cut-stone platform, like an Indian charbutra, both point to an earlier owner. His name will be found under the entrance arch, where facing the rival chapel a white marble tablet set into the wall tells in flowing Arabic how "El Haj Sakh, the Pilgrim of Mecca, owned this property known as Vall-durgent.

## Chapter XI

### MAJORCA: "SON" GARDENS

"El hombre siempre busca un más allá."

*Spanish proverb.*

OLD as many of the "sons" must be, there is little to indicate their exact date. Their plain Moorish buildings merge imperceptibly into later Renaissance work without a Gothic interval. There is an absence of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century domestic building in Palma also; but this is accounted for by a conflagration in the fifteenth century which swept away a large part of the Moorish Gothic city. Certain fine buildings escaped the flames, chiefly those on the water-front, such as the Almudaina, the Moorish citadel; the Loja, the famous Exchange where the merchants of Genoa and Valencia met to arrange transhipments—a trade which formed the backbone of the island's long prosperity until steam altered old routes—and the Cathedral, one of the most magnificent and impressive in the world, with its great south door opening on the sea.

Another fine Gothic building is the round castle of Bellver commenced by Don Jaime II. But castles are rare in Majorca. One of the few exceptions is Deflá, just beyond Seniu, far across the plain in the south-east corner of the island.

This place, belonging to the Conte d'Espana, is seldom visited by strangers and consequently the way there is not very easy to find. Only a succession of astonished but kindly disposed country folk, picked up by my resourcful motor-driver and carried on to the next turning, enabled me at length to reach its gates.

Leaving the main road, a drive of some distance through a dark, mysterious-looking wood of ilex and fir trees led to the edge of a low cliff where, standing in the open sunlight, the Gothic castle with swallow-tailed battlements came as a complete and dramatic surprise.

Between the keep and a large Gothic chapel extended the dwelling-house wing which had obviously been altered some time in the seventeenth century. The terraced gardens below its shuttered windows belonged to the same period. A large enclosure to the right of the main entrance proved bright with geraniums and roses, although wild Madonna lilies, beds of which are a feature of Majorcan gardens, had not yet unclosed their narrow-pointed petals, and the irises growing in masses among the orange and loquat trees were over. The other garden under the east façade of the house had been more ornamentally laid out, but the clipped cypress trees along the edge of the upper terrace had soared out of reach of the gardener's shears. On the next level, too, the myrtle hedges, neglected for many years, quite obscured the lines of the stone-edged parterre; the statue in the central oval bed was all but drowned in a sea of white daisies—huge bushes of them grown to an amazing height. At the back of the courtyard a third garden, showing traces of an interesting lay-out, was now only an orchard.

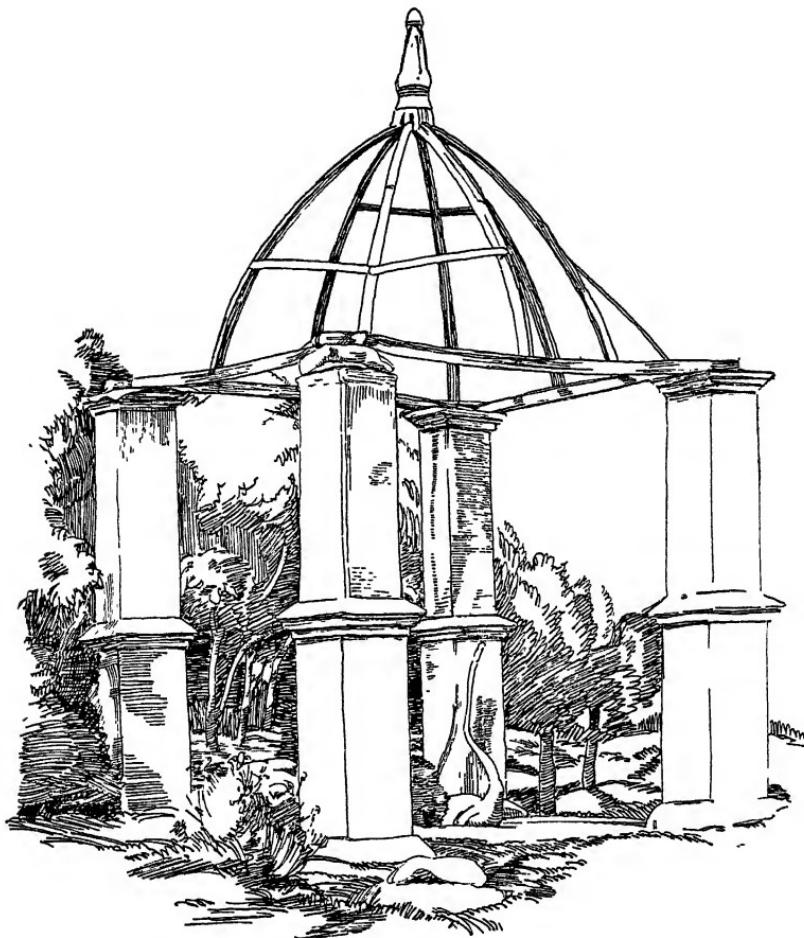
Emerging suddenly, as I did, from the deep shadows of the ilex wood, the group of sunlit buildings, the Gothic keep with its embattled walls of dazzling cream sandstone, the terraced garden with its classical figures on the balustrade over the big water-tank, outlined against a background of simmering distant blue, seemed the enchanted palace of a dream—an enchantment only heightened by the wild melancholy cry of the castle peacocks calling up the rain that never comes.

It is tempting to go into details of many of these out-of-

## MAJORCA: "SON" GARDENS

the-way "sons," but a word or two about them is all that space permits.

Some miles beyond Deflá, crowning a hill, is a most



Glorieta, Son Roqueta

romantic place. Son Roqueta is its name. From without it looks like a group of rather dilapidated church buildings, but once inside the patio, or "clastras," as it is called in Mallorquin, a beautiful arcaded double stairway proclaims

the former grandeur of the house. I had been told to look for an equally romantic garden, and passing through the big farm kitchen found a secluded walled enclosure with stone pergolas, and a charming eighteenth-century glorieta in the centre built of masonry and wood. But the people of the place could not be persuaded that this garden was what I had come so far to see. A guide was sent to show me what they considered the real sight of Son Roqueta. Leaving the garden by a postern gate, climbing a lower wall beyond it, and scrambling along as best we could among briars and thorny bushes, we reached the base of a round tower. A spiral way led to the top of this miniature Tower of Babel where I was assured would be found the most wonderful old pictures. With much difficulty the long-locked door was forced open, and all that I saw inside was a little shell grotto, one of those curious products of the early nineteenth century occasionally met with in old English gardens. For a moment Son Roqueta vanished. Russet leaves came fluttering down on a grotto in a Norfolk beech wood; beside me, in place of my guide, was a charming old lady (close on a hundred) seated in her pony-carriage, telling with pride how as a girl she had helped to make the "Shell-house."

Returning rather crestfallen to the Casa, I found the paintings there more to my taste. Both people and place had seen better days. The present members of the ancient family, who received me so kindly, now inhabited the farm kitchen. The rooms to which the Renaissance stairway led were left undisturbed to the bats and the mice. But here and there some pictures and furniture remained. In what had once been the grand sala, a painted linen dado hung round the walls. It represented a landscape with figures, a delightful piece of work in the luminously clear style of the Umbrian school.

A painted dado is a form of decoration often seen in Majorcan houses; as a rule it belongs to Baroque days when



DELFA  
The Well in the Farm Court



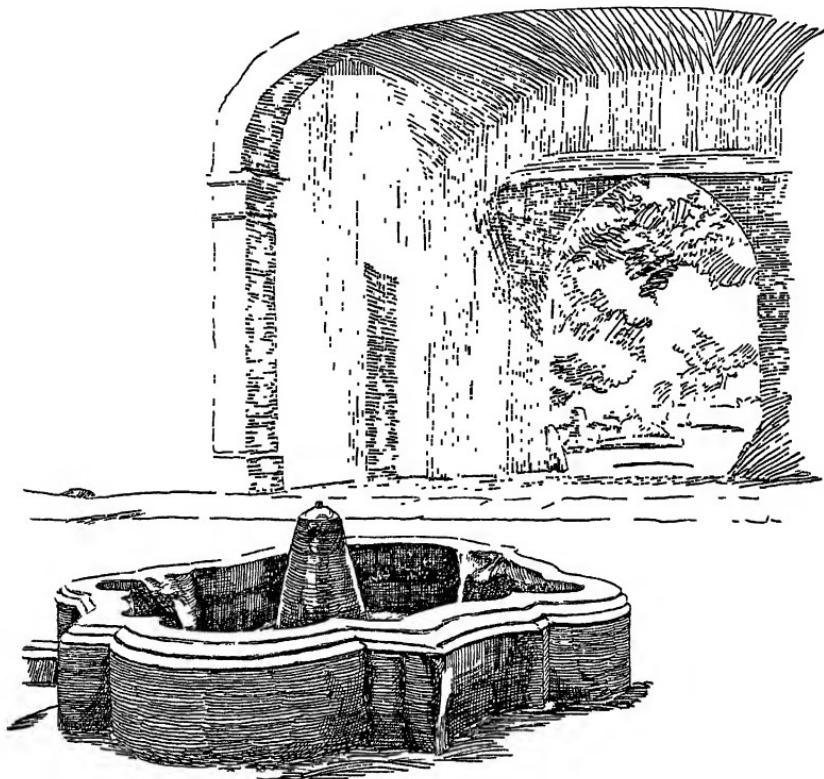
SON MASSENELLA

the walls above it were covered with costly brocades from Valencia, red and yellow being favourite colours. At Son Verí, the property of the Marqués de Verí, several rooms and a magnificent yellow picture gallery are treated in this manner. In the gallery with other treasures, including a very early picture of the Madonna with a lily in her hand, are portraits of two of the Verí family who were Grand Masters of St. John of Jerusalem, and one of the Grand Master, Philip de Villiers, who removed the headquarters of the Order to Malta.

Son Verí is full of fine pictures and furniture, but its garden is lost in the surrounding pine wood. There is more of the original lay-out left at Son Massenella near Mancor, at the foot of the northern mountains. This "son" has recently changed hands, so the contents of the house have been dispersed. But fortunately a remarkable set of pictures has been left behind in the sala for which it was painted. The paintings illustrate the five harvests of the "son." They show the peasants working in their traditional costume, the men in baggy black knickers and wide black hats, the women in full blue petticoats and the "rebozilla," the head-dress fastened under the chin, a relic of the Moorish veil. The harvests are as follow: the harvest of the grain, reaping and thrashing the corn; the olive gathering, men climbing and shaking the trees, women catching the little black fruit in their voluminous skirts and carrying it away in baskets; the carob harvest, when the long bean-like pods are picked and stored as winter fodder for the cattle; the fuel gathering, cutting trees and lopping branches to feed the big fires of autumn; and last and most characteristic of Son Massenella, the winter harvest of the snow. This picture, which puzzled me at first sight, shows men high on the mountain-side behind the manor-house, busily shovelling snow into little thatched huts, ice-houses where it was preserved, so that the

favourite luxury of iced sherbet might not be lacking when summer days came round.

Another mountain "son" with a long history is Son Moragues on the outskirts of Valldemosa. From its broad gallery under the roof eaves in the Catalan style a wonderful



Courtyard Fountain, Son Moragues

view can be enjoyed of the pass and the road leading down to the north shore. The flat fountain basin in the courtyard and the wooden main stairway both recall the Moorish influence in the island. The chapel here, instead of occupying its usual place on the right-hand side under the entrance arch, leads out of the sala on the first floor. Various additions have been made from time to time to the lay-out. The small

## MAJORCA: "SON" GARDENS

formal garden on the south side is dated 1792; and behind the house a very steep terraced garden, with beautiful cypress walks leading up to a large round storage tank, has been constructed by the Moragues family as recently as 1874.

Close by, perched on the shoulder of the pass leading from Palma to the north coast of the island, between sombre mountain peaks, lies the little town of Valldemosa. Its houses cluster round the Cartuja, once an Arab summer residence, then a royal hunting lodge which the pious King Martin granted in 1399 to the Carthusians, and now, since the dis-establishment, the lovely country house of Señora de Bonsoms.

To the outside world, Valldemosa is known as the birth-place of Chopin's Preludes. He and George Sand spent the winter of 1838 here in the empty convento. Of their cell garden, only twenty feet square, she wrote: "As for the parterre planted with pomegranates, lemons and oranges, surrounded by paved walks, shaded as well as the tank by a fragrant arbour, it is like a pretty room made of flowers and greenery."

Out of a number of these cells and gardens, joined to the larger rooms and cloisters of the former Prior of the Order, a fascinating house and garden has been made. The view from the great south terrace is one of extraordinary grandeur. The house has been cleverly adapted, and is full of beautiful island furniture. What most took my fancy was a large green lacquer cabinet for sweet herbs, each drawer painted with its appropriate flower, the medicine-chest from a dismantled "son."

The tranquillity of Majorca, to which the island owes so much, was rarely broken. Storms that shook the Spanish mainland left the Balearics untouched. Only on two occasions since the conquest has there been serious trouble. The first was the rising in 1521 against the nobles who supported the

hated Austrians; the second, the general disturbance following on the Bourbon occupation in 1715. It was then, when some of the vast old possessions were broken up, that the numerous walls in the country round Palma were constructed. Son Berga and Son Sarria came into existence about this time at the parcelling out of Son Gaul.

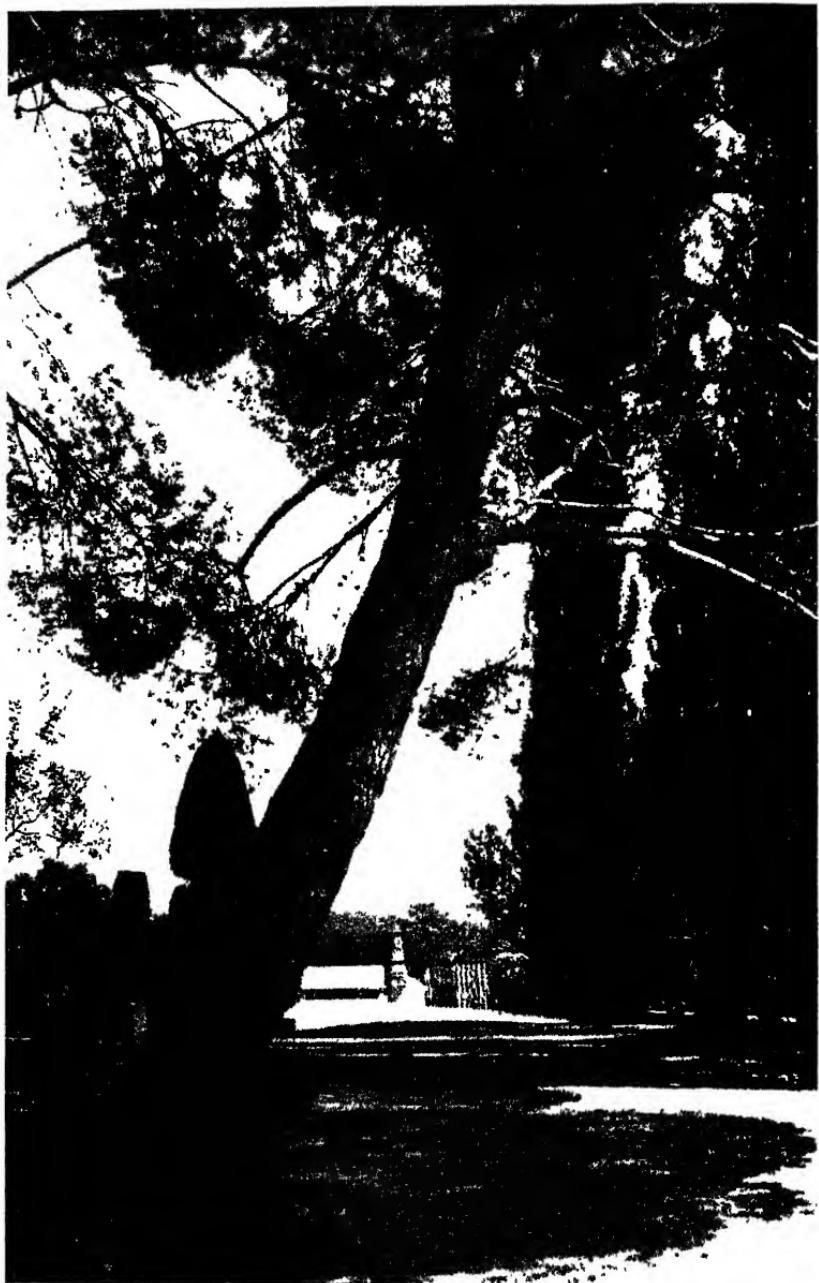
Son Berga, the property of Don José Zaforteza, has a house of the classic island style finely placed above the village of Establiments, not far from Palma. From its triple-arched loggia there is a wonderful view of the city and harbour. The garden below is carried out on old lines, with sunk beds and raised stone-edged walks bordered by clipped box, not unlike those in the Alcázar at Seville. Beyond its terraces an avenue of palms leads through the finça down to a small gate in the outer walls. A broad drive at the back of the house, and winding walks among the pine woods, have been added at a later date.

The mountain estate of Son Sarriá is noted for its exquisite tiled kitchen. No other word adequately describes the beauty of the colour scheme; the seventeenth-century Valencian tiles, which cover the walls and even the hood of the huge fireplace, harmonize so perfectly with the copper cooking vessels hanging on their glistening surfaces of orange, blue and green. Opening out of this kitchen, which is only used when the family are in residence, is a big pantry or store-room filled with precious china and glass, decorated, but more sparingly, with the same lovely tiles.

The gay little formal garden on the great bastion in front of the house with its fountain and stone-edged beds is a good example of a simple island type, a place where lilies, geraniums and roses are grown for the chapel altar. Every "son" had at least this much of a garden. In the city itself I came across one on a roof. It was at the Casa Vivót, approached through the private rooms on the first story;



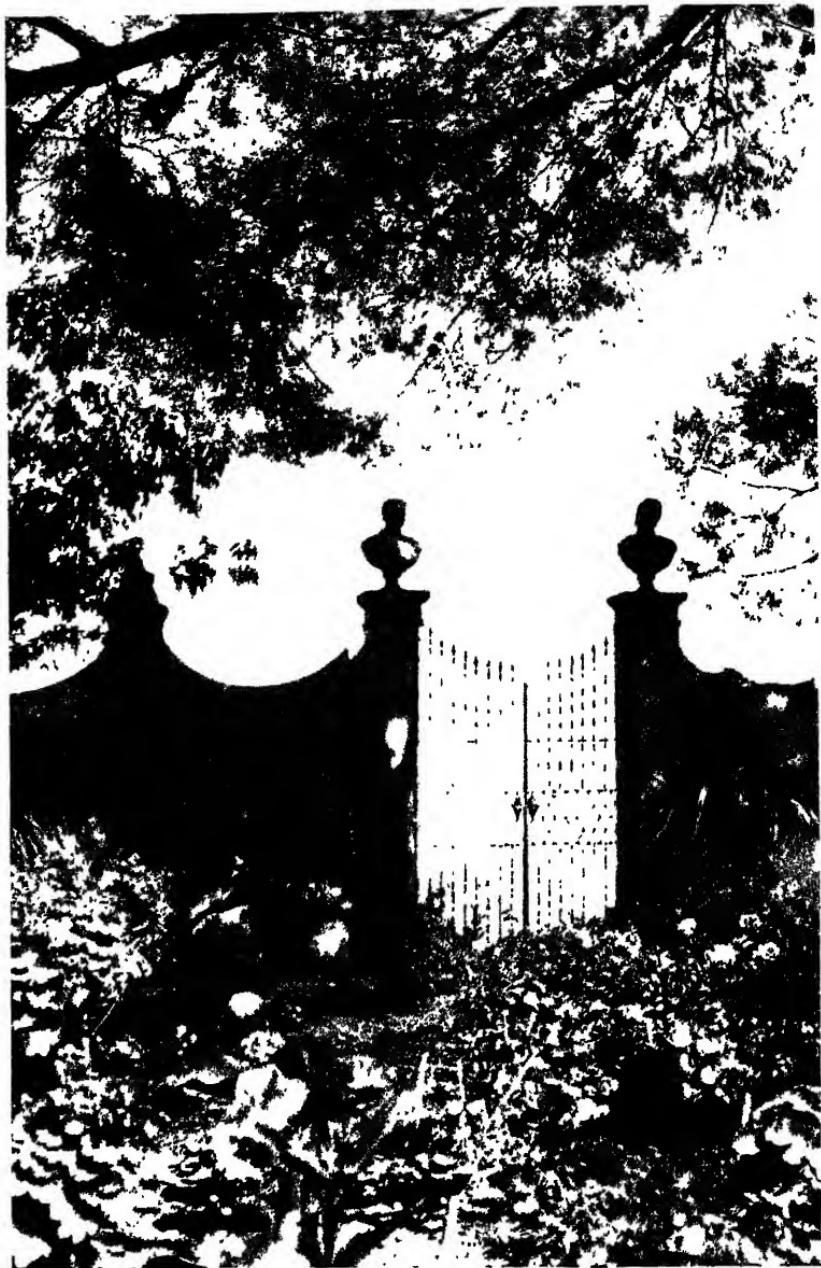
SON BERGA



SON BERGA  
“Sunk Beds and Raised Stone-Edged Walks”



VILLA RUBERT  
Sea Walks



SON CALDERET  
The Baroque Garden

and it was astonishing to see tall cypresses as well as holly-hocks and other flowers growing there, high up above the street.

The palace, which is one of the finest in Palma, belongs to the Marquesa de Vivót. The present King and Queen of Spain were entertained there when they visited the island. A bed in one of the many state rooms hung with rich blue and silver brocade ornamented with beautifully worked raised flowers, the buds of which form the buttons fastening the side curtains, is a precious relic of a former royal visit. It was used by the Emperor Charles V in his tent when he camped outside Palma. No doubt something like it adorned the tents of his royal contemporaries at the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

There are many stately palaces in the city, but few of them can boast gardens. Their large paved courts, so striking on entering from the narrow streets, are thoroughfares for the work of the household rather than open-air rooms shaded by vines and bright with potted plants, like the Andalucian patios. But in the seaside suburb of El Terreno many little eighteenth- and nineteenth-century villas have charming garden courts; the steep lie of the land having made a necessity of terraced building, old forms are happily preserved.

On the actual sea-front are two larger gardens. In the grounds of the Villa Rubert, now used as an industrial school, walks have been cut in the cliffs; walks overhung by pine trees and protected where dangerous by a low parapet wall of distinctly Moorish origin. It was from this garden on the coast that, looking back, I discovered the whereabouts of Son Calderet and its romantic Baroque pleasance. From the land side I should never have found it, for the house was completely hidden away behind other buildings, and the entrance, through a gateway in a high blank wall, gave no hint, beyond the date 1777, of what was within.

The big red house, with an outside stairway leading to the first story, overlooked a large lower garden laid out in traditional style; a cypress arbour stood where the main paths crossed, and a platform jutting out over the water at one corner was balanced by a bathing pavilion at the other. But the most attractive feature of the place was the little west court. It formed part of the house, to which it was joined by a screen wall with curious oval openings lighting a passage down to the shore. High iron gates led from the entrance grounds into this secluded patio, matched by another pair opposite which, opening on to the wall of the south terrace, appeared to open directly on the sea. Busts of Spanish heroes surmounted the gate-posts and crowned the pillars on either side of a deeply recessed alcove, all the stonework being of a warm golden hue which toned delightfully with the faded reds of the house. In the middle of the parterre stood a huge pine, its dense green branches casting welcome patches of shade and screening off effectively the windows of the upper story. Below it, beds of scarlet and pink geraniums made a dazzling contrast with the turquoise Mediterranean shining through the iron lattice-work, and the deeper blue, the azul of the painted plaster walls. Bathed in the radiance of a May afternoon, this little garden seemed the perfect setting for a Baroque fairy tale, the Princess of Nodding Plumes, escorted by two frolicsome pugs and her black page, lifting her stiff brocaded skirts, must have just stepped delicately out of its gates.

## Chapter XII

### ROUND MADRID

“ De Madrid al Cielo,  
y en Cielo un ventamillo  
para ver à Madrid.”

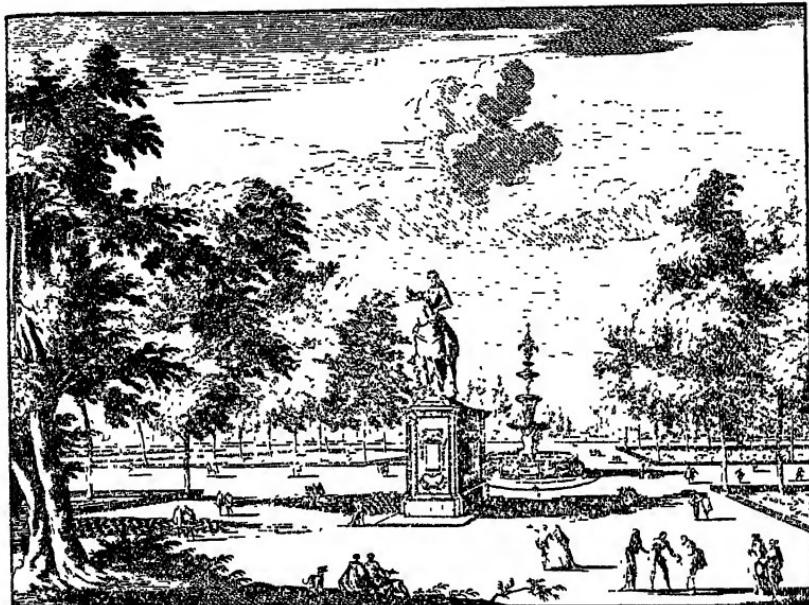
*Local saying.*

THE neighbourhood of Madrid is not a promising one for gardens. In winter, icy winds from the Guadarramas sweep the plateau; in summer, a fierce sun burns up the scanty grass. There is a saying: “ Castile furnishes no flowers.” But there have always been flowers in the royal gardens round Madrid since Philip II established the *Única Corte*.

The gardens he and some of his successors made are illustrated in Colmenar’s *Les Délices de l’Espagne*, published in 1715. Folded away in its crisp brown pages are engravings of their principal reservoirs and fountains, and bird’s-eye views of the alleys cut through the surrounding pine woods. In those days there was no garden on the river bank below the fortress palace. The nearest royal pleasure-ground was the Casa de Campo, on the low-lying land beyond the Manzanares, a country place with pavilions and fountains quite in the Moorish manner. How long Moorish ideas lingered at the Spanish court can be seen in a letter describing the adventure of Charles, Prince of Wales, and his friend, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, when they tried to meet the Infanta Doña Maria in the gardens of the Casa de Campo:

“ Not long since the Prince, understanding that the Infanta was used to go some mornings to the Casa de

Campo, a summer-house the King hath on the other side of the river, to gather May-dew, he did rise betimes and went thither taking your brother with him. They were let into the house and garden; but the Infanta was in the orchard, there being a high partition wall between, and the door doubly bolted; the Prince got on the top of the wall and sprung down

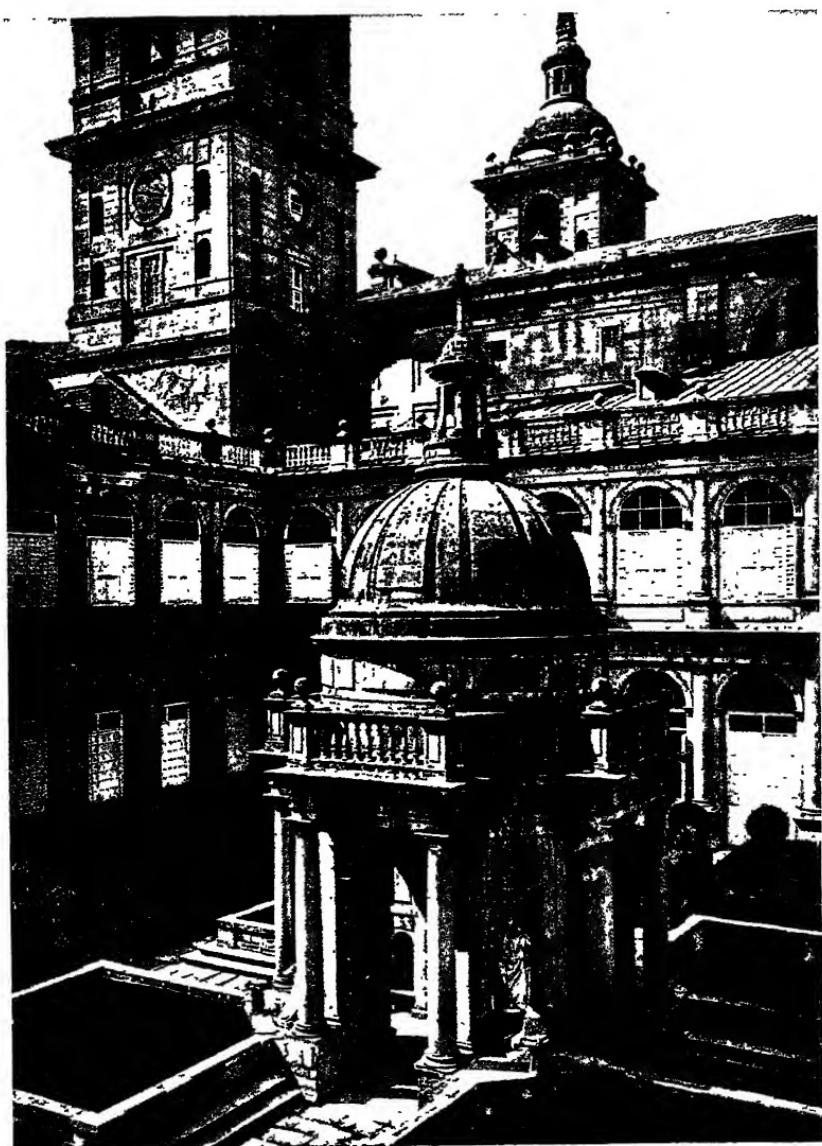


Casa de Campo, Madrid

a great height and so made toward her. But she spying him the first of all gave a shriek and ran back. The old Marquis that was then her guardian, came towards the Prince and fell on his knees, conjuring His Highness to retire, in regard that he hazarded his head if he admitted any to her company. So the door was open and he came out under that wall over which he had got in."

Cadalso de los Vidrios is a little known seventeenth century terraced garden in the Guadarramas belonging to the Marqués de Villena. Other gardens nearer Madrid that retain

PLATE LXIII



PATIO OF THE ESCORIAL



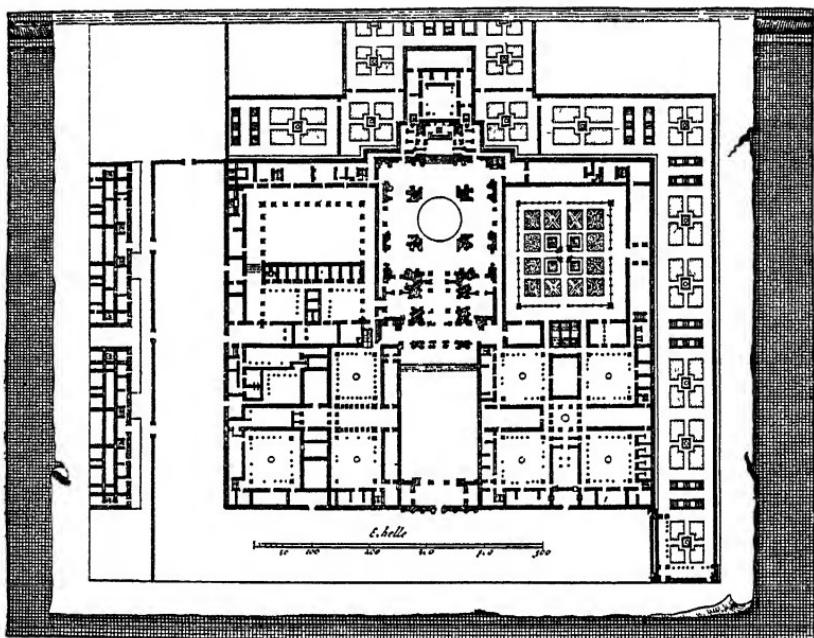
ARANJUEZ  
The Palace by the Tagus

traces of their original lay-out are El Pardo, remodelled by Philip IV, La Quinta and La Zarzuela, which belonged to Philip's brother, the Cardinal Infante Ferdinand, who shared the King's taste for plays and open-air entertainments. All these appear in *Les Délices de l'Espagne*, together with engravings of two royal domains rather further from the capital, places to which the court moved out *en bloc* when life in Madrid became unbearably hot. And within the range of a single province, however varied, it would be difficult to find a contrast greater than that between the grim Monasterio Real de San Lorenzo, to give the Escorial its proper name, and Aranjuez, the smiling oasis by the Tagus.

It was raining as I motored out to the Escorial—not at all the sort of day I had visualized. The city and its few out-lying villas left behind, for some miles the only feature to be seen through the streaming window-panes was the long park wall of La Zarzuela, and its distant roof rising through the pines and scrub oak. Then at the plateau limit, as the car started climbing the foot-hills, swinging abruptly round their sharp angles, flowers began to appear. Not the brilliant riot of an Andalucian spring, but a sober scheme of purple and white curiously suited to the Castilian landscape. Drifts of dark Spanish lavender filled the sandy ravines that ran down to the roadway, looking like patches of purple velvet embroidered on a background of tarnished gold. Among the rocks on either hand, large white cistuses opened surprised chocolate eyes, showing their yellow tasselled centres drenched with the moisture. No other colours varied the monotony, only, as we rose, tufts of thyme replaced the lavender bushes, and a smaller, pure white, cistus clothed the boulders. Even these flowers ceased before we reached what is known as the Escorial de Abajo, the little village that has grown up at the foot of the monastery palace. Above it, in the midst of the hills, towered the Escorial de Arriba; for

all its Scotch severity of aspect and outline, one of the strangest manifestations of the Iberian spirit.

This gaunt building, so often described and discussed, has been treated sometimes as a purely personal expression of the taste of Philip II. But typically Spanish in his mystic



Plan of the Escorial Monastery Palace and Garden Terraces

piety, the King must have felt the call of his country's earliest influence when he built the Escorial. In its setting, in its plainness, in its size, there is a unity, an intensity, an extravagance, that outdoes the most exuberant Iberian fancies of Spanish Gothic and Spanish Baroque.

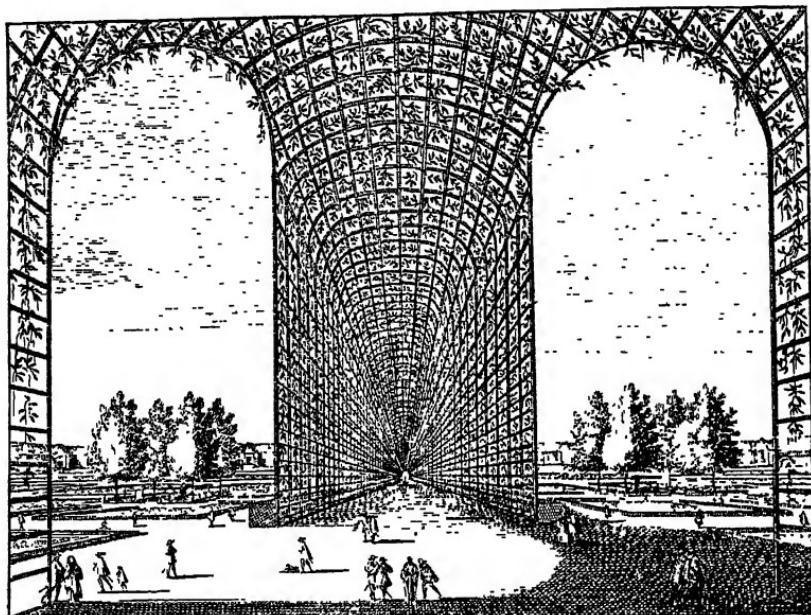
It is quite in character that its granite terraces should be laid out with severe geometrical designs in clipped box, with green balls at intervals repeating the only ornamental motif of the stonework. And although here and there a rose bush or

tall hollyhock may manage to struggle up out of the prevailing greenness, this box geometry constitutes the dominant note. It is a form of garden treatment the charm of which depends on whether we are attuned or not to the cadence of such ordered rhythms.

The contrast between the Escorial and Aranjuez is a contrast as much of personality as of site. At the Escorial, religious ceremonies and processions occupied Philip II. At Aranjuez by the Tagus, his grandson, Philip IV, the heavy sad-faced king so well known from his portraits by Velázquez, turned the gardens into a stage for the masks and plays he loved. Philip IV and Charles IV are the two monarchs chiefly associated with Aranjuez; but each Spanish ruler has done something to embellish the palace founded on the site of a conventional establishment built in 1387 by the Grand Master of the Order of Santiago. The Sitio owes its luxuriance to a sort of natural weir in the Tagus which rendered the irrigation of the valley at this point a comparatively simple matter. Isla, as it was first called, became a favourite summer residence of Isabella the Catholic. The Emperor Charles V built a hunting lodge which Philip II enlarged. It was this king who planted the avenues of English elms (*ulmus nigra*) that are still a striking feature. He also laid out the Jardin de la Isla on the island formed by the Ria canal and the Tagus. His fountains and parterres remain to this day much as they are shown in *Les Délices de l'Espagne*, except for the treillage that shaded the pathways. This no longer exists, nor is it needed now the trees have grown so big that the garden squares form one dense green woodland.

Here, under the English elms, King Philip IV held high revel. The palace seems to have suffered from these festivities; for it was twice burnt down, once in 1660, and again five years later. It was rebuilt by Philip V, the first Bourbon, who made the great French "décor" on the south front

with its interlacing curves and oval fountain basins. Each reign saw an addition to the series of gardens along the river bank leading off the Calle de la Reina, the majestic avenue of elms and planes extending for three miles up the valley. At the far end is La Casa de Labrador, built by Charles IV, the



The Treillage Gallery, Aranjuez

patron of Goya—about as much of a labourer's cottage as that of Marie Antoinette at Versailles.

This setting of palace garden and country huerta in an idyllic world of make-believe forms the background of Goya's splendid tapestries. Against vast luminous skies the happy pageant of life goes forward, moving in a summer glow of brilliant reflected light. One would expect to find the forty-five best known tapestries hanging on the walls of Aranjuez; but they are not there. It seems a strange irony that imprisons some of the loveliest in the Escorial de Arriba.



ARANJUEZ  
Garden Parterre



ARANJUEZ  
Fountain of Flora

The Casa de Labrador saw the last of the great days at Aranjuez. On March 18th, 1818, the people rose and stormed the palace of Godoy, "Principe de la Paz," the all-powerful favourite of Charles IV. The next day the King abdicated in favour of his son, Ferdinand VII, and the court left this beautiful but ill-omened spot. Since when the gardeners, and the nightingales for which it is famous, have reigned undisturbed.

Time in its circle bringing all things round again, has brought the Spanish court back to Aranjuez. But now it comes by motor, for the day only. The broad highway from Madrid is crowded with glittering Hispano-Suizas in May when the races are run at this Spanish Ascot.

## Chapter XIII

### LA GRANJA

“A fuller light illumined all,  
A breeze thro’ all the garden swept,  
A sudden hubbub shook the hall,  
And sixty feet the fountain leapt.”

*Tennyson.*

OF the four famous royal gardens, the Generalife, the Alcázar, Aranjuez, and La Granja, perhaps the last is the least known outside Spain. It resembles the Generalife in its terraced site and unity of plan. The level gardens of the Alcázar and Aranjuez show the changing taste of the centuries in their alterations and additions, La Granja proclaims, as we enter it, that the Bourbons have arrived.

The last quarter of the seventeenth century saw the triumph of the “Grand Manner” as practised at Vaux-le-Vicomte and Versailles. It was then that France definitely replaced Italy as the arbitrator of fashion in European estimation. But as the fresh imaginative impulse of the Renaissance slowly died out, the tyranny of the Classical tradition set in; form became more a question of restraint than of beauty, pleasure a matter of convention rather than of choice. To be correct was the only possible attitude for a man of taste, and to be correct was to be French; French in speech, manners, clothes, food, feelings, poetry, architecture and gardening. Each little court of “Mittel Europa” proceeded, as best it could, to lay out palace gardens in imitation of Le Roi Soleil. The fashion spread to Denmark and Sweden



SPRING AT LA GRANJA



and even penetrated as far as Russia, where perhaps the finest example of the style, outside France, is to be seen in the gardens laid out at Peterhof by Le Blond, a pupil of Le Nôtre. Holland and England, alone in Northern Europe, withstood the attraction of this almost universal style. Spain, under a French king, bowed politely to the French fashion, but retained her own individual way of doing things.

It is interesting, therefore, to hear how La Granja strikes a French garden architect. M. Georges Gromort, in his delightful book, *Jardins d'Espagne*, goes into the matter very thoroughly, and in so doing reveals the origin and aim—the nationality of French gardening.

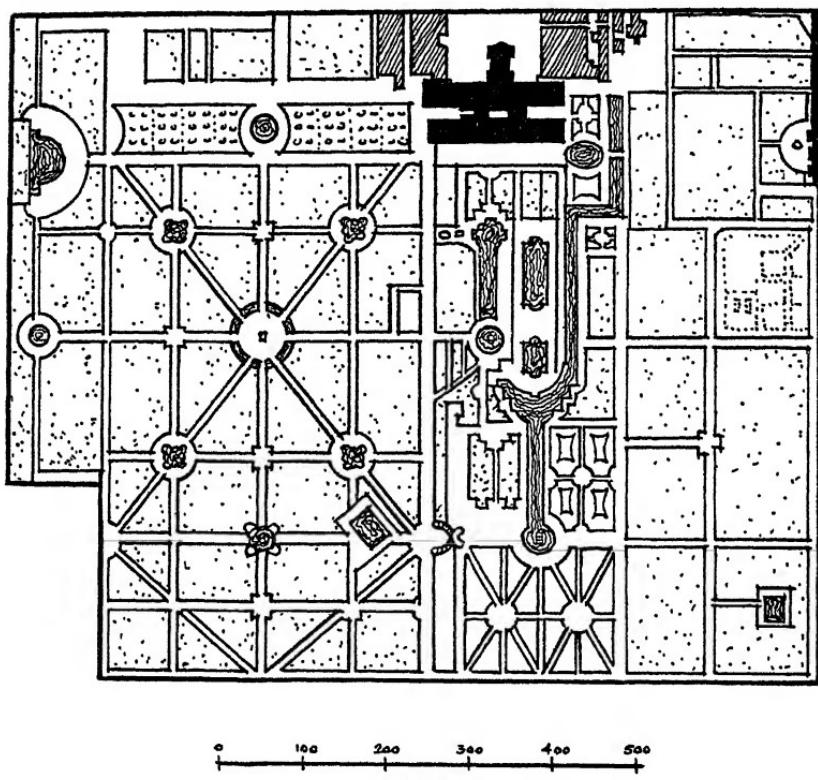
First of all he objects to the site: “La nature du terrain est ici particulièrement mouvementée qu'elle se prête mal à la plantation d'un grand décor français.” “Le niveau parfait,” is always the French gardener's ideal.

The next thing that worries him is the way the trees are planted: “Nulle part on n'a pu ménager ces échappées et ces beaux espaces découverts, dont le contraste avec les parties boisées est le principe même de toute composition de jardins.” In these two remarks lies the whole history of French garden design evolved in the wooded plains round Paris.

M. Gromort continues: “Whatever the interest of the arrangement that crowns the mountain-side, the want of style must be manifest to anyone who retains the least souvenir of Versailles and its ample parterres, which in three directions at once show distant perspectives. . . . Here, in front of the Palace are three motifs, side by side, separated only by a thin curtain of foliage, and not having the least relation to each other; one can hardly say for certain if the axis of the central parterre is really the central axis of the garden. It is enough to glance at the plan to understand the confusion caused by this scattering of interest.”

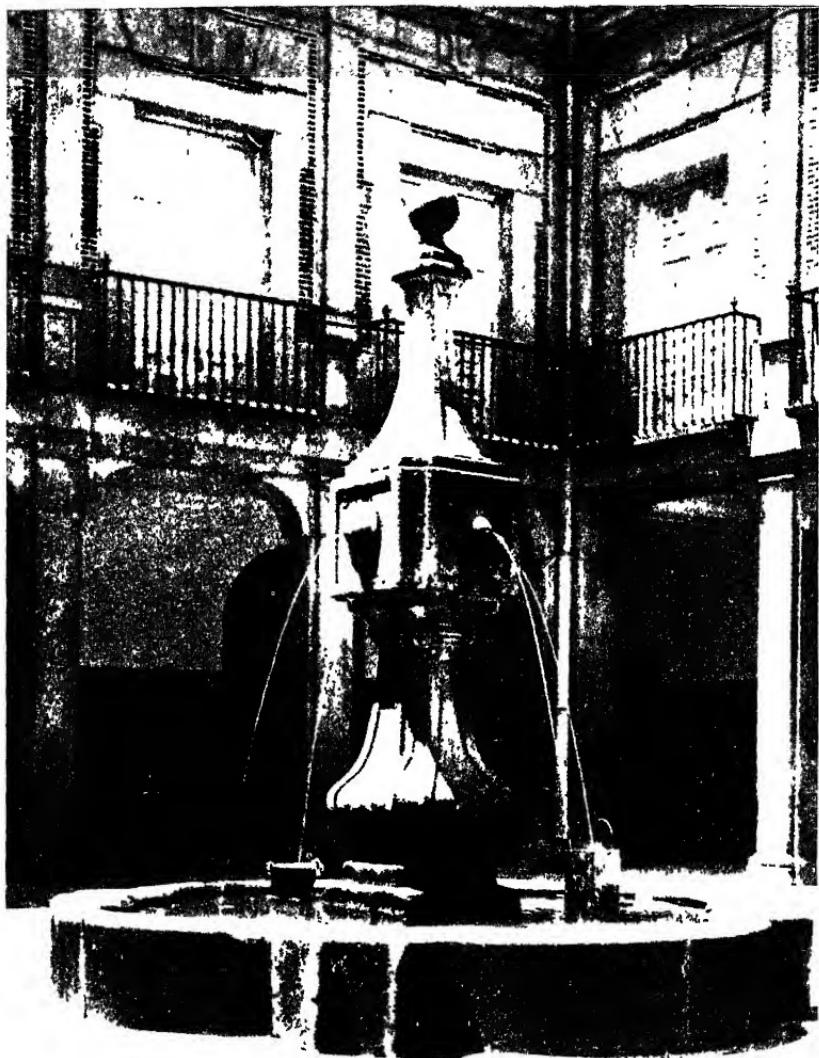
Seeing Spain after India, coming to La Granja fresh from

Andalucia, my impression was different from M. Gromort's. What most struck me was the way the older influences had survived the overwhelming French invasion. The garden of all others La Granja recalled was the Nishat Bagh by the



Plan la Granja—Palace and Gardens

Dal Lake in Kashmir. This first impression may have been due to the long lines of the avenues and the dark-blue mountain background (alike in both cases), but the character of the ornamental waterfalls, the irrigation channels for the trees, and the way in which the water from the main canal was conducted through the palace, forming a fountain in the central dining-room, were unmistakably Eastern details. I saw La Granja in May, when the parterres were empty and



PATIO DE LA FUENTE  
“With its four slender rivers of Paradise”



LA GRANJA  
The Garden Front

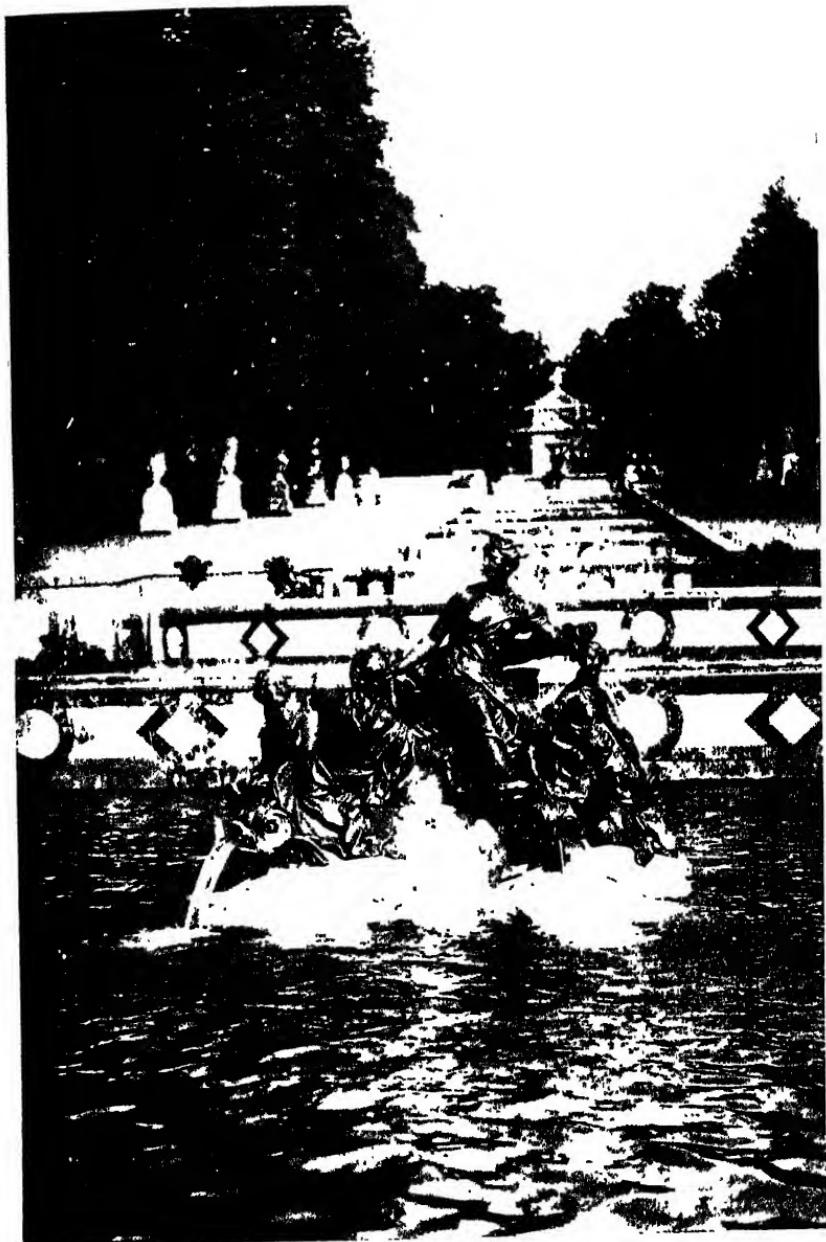
the lime avenues enclosing the mountain vistas just coming into leaf, but in autumn, when the trees are turning and the flower-beds blaze with colour, this Spanish garden must be yet more like Asaf Khan's famous Garden of Gladness.

The Ermita de San Ildefonso, standing at an altitude of 3,795 feet in the pine woods on the north slope of the Guadarramas, seven miles above the medieval capital of Segovia, was the site chosen by the first Bourbon king for his new palace. The Hermitage and a hunting lodge had been built there in 1450 by Henry IV, brother of Queen Isabella. The Catholic kings presented the estate to the Monastery of Parral, and Philip V purchased the place from the Hieronymite Community in 1719. Round the "granja" (grange farm) of the monks—leaving the old tiled courtyard and lovely Gothic fountain with its four slender rivers of paradise in the heart of the new scheme—King Philip began the construction of a great royal domain to console him for those he had left behind in La Belle France. A fine avenue, commencing at an ornamental bridge over the river, leads up through the Sitio Real to the high iron-work gates of an oval forecourt. Here the French influence receives a check. The usual plan is altered: instead of an imposing palace entrance, the apse of the Colegiata (the Collegiate Church) occupies the centre of the building, recalling King Philip II's dictum: "The chapel is the first room the Kings of Spain build in their houses." This change produced a corner entrance under a wide arch leading to the garden forecourt—an approach more in keeping with the old Moorish palaces of Andalucia than with those of Latin Europe. The gardens themselves, which are noted for their fountains, cover 350 acres. On the left of the entrance a large sunk parterre decorated with magnificent marble vases, leads to the Jet of La Fama. The terrace walk immediately above ends at the greatest of Baroque wall-fountains, Los Baños de Diana. La Plaza de

las Ocho Calles (eight paths) is another curious Baroque composition, a painting of which can be seen at the Casa de Labrador at Aranjuez. Eight arches of white marble, reminiscent of the marble swing at Dīg, near Agra, enclose statues of gods and goddesses backed by a screen of clipped hornbeam. The paths lead to eight other fountains concealed in the woodland. But the finest of all the fountains are those on the south front of the palace added by Isabella Farnese as a surprise for her husband, Philip V, on his return after a prolonged absence. The sculptors, Thierry and Frémin, exhausted their ingenuity, and bronze working received a fresh impulse from the number of statues and pieces ordered. The beautiful display crowned by the Fuente de Andrómeda is focussed on the King's private rooms at the side of the palace. It is this act of wifely devotion which so disturbs M. Gromort, for, as he points out, it upsets the logic of the general plan. What King Philip thought about it is crystallized in his saying: "It has cost me three millions, and amused me three minutes." But possibly he was not insensible to such charming flattery—it may only have been a husband-like way of discouraging further expense. For the Queen's building propensities did not stop there. It was she who built the great square palace of Rio Frio, about nine miles away, which stands out in the landscape like a medieval fortress with the wild park country sweeping up to its walls.

Isabella's son, Charles III, who shared his mother's tastes and built Caserta, the Versailles of his kingdom of Naples, did much to improve La Granja, and foster the celebrated Fabrica de Cristales, the glass-works founded in 1734.

In the next reign, Lady Holland visited La Granja and made the following entry in her diary: June 19th, 1803. "The baby so ill we resolved to try the cool mountain air of San Ildefonso. Remained there until the 7th July. The



LA GRANJA  
The Marble Stairs



THE FOUNTAIN OF ANDROMEDA  
“A Great Plume of Water Shot out of the Dragon’s Mouth”



THE FOUNTAIN OF ANDROMEDA  
“As It Came Splashing down the Whole Group Came to Life”



LA GRANJA  
The Fountain of the Three Graces

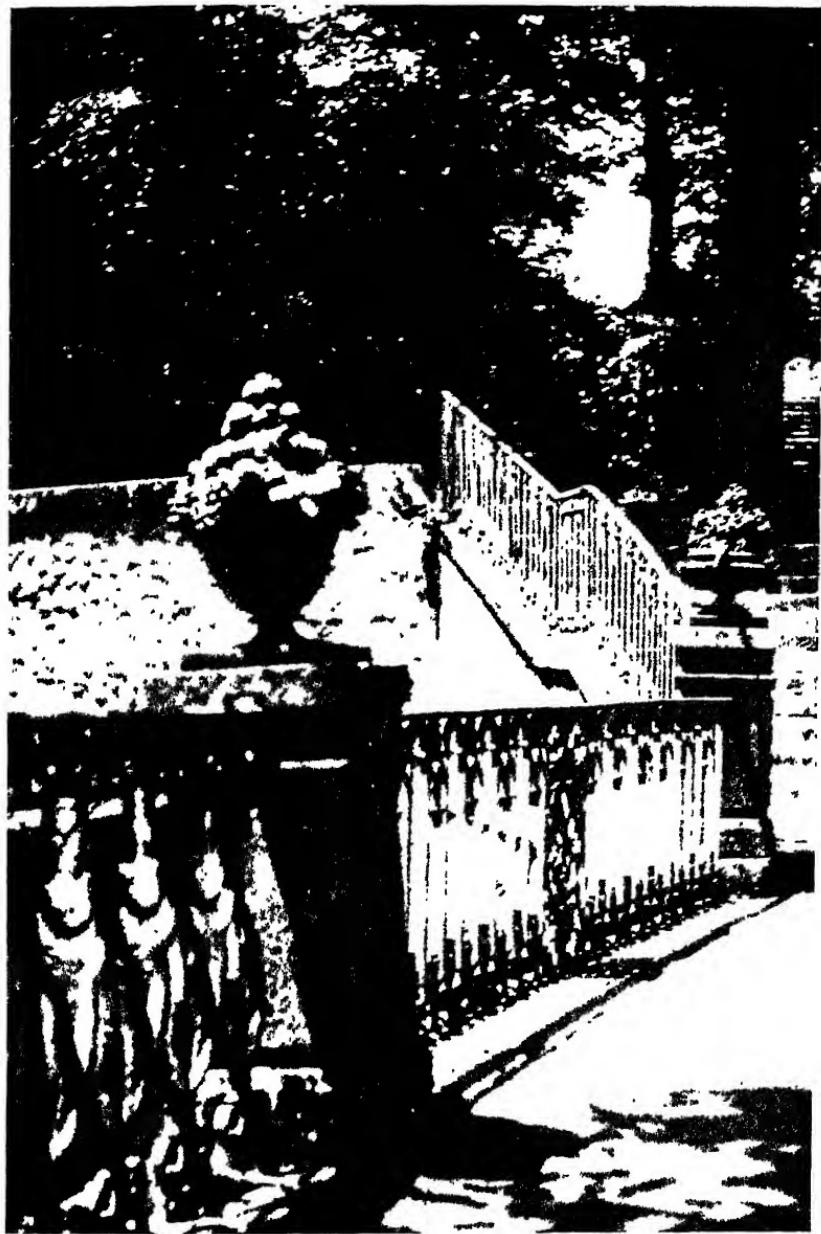
gardens are reckoned among the finest in Europe; they are in the old French style of high clipped hedges, salons de verdure, alleys, etc. Tho' that is the style I prefer far beyond any other, yet these gardens are sombre, and only striking from the number of their fountains, which stand unrivalled. We obtained permission from the Intendente to have the fountains play for us, a request usually complied with upon paying two ounces of gold. I was surprised as seeing channels to convey water to the roots of the trees, the same as is used at Aranjuez and Madrid. There there is no moisture or coolness, but here the neighbourhood of the mountains causes frequent storms of thunder and rain. Besides the great garden we saw the private ones of the King and Queen; in one we were shown the hedge behind which the King conceals himself to shoot at sparrows. . . . the garden front is rather handsome; the windows are of large plate glass made at the manufactory, joined together without frames. The best apartments are not occupied, as Carlos III lived in them, and the Queen, who dislikes the stillness of the gardens, prefers remaining in those she occupied as Princess of the Asturias, as from them she can see the court in which the Gardes de Corps exercise, etc., etc. In the lower rooms is the collection of statues, busts and bronzes belonging to Christiana of Sweden, and purchased at her death by Philip V, at Rome. We saw in detail the glass manufactory; they ran a large plate for us. In point of size, several have been made which surpass those cast either in France, Bohemia, Venice or England. They reckon extreme slightness a merit in the material; the goblets that are highly wrought hardly weigh more than writing paper would in the same form."

An event with a tragic sequence for the country happened at La Granja in 1832 when Ferdinand VII, who was lying ill there, revoked the Pragmatic Sanction. By doing so, he acknowledged his brother, Don Carlos, as heir to the throne.

When he got better, he changed his mind and restored his infant daughter to the succession. The result of this wavering was the civil war which at his death devastated Spain. At La Granja also, by a military "Pronunciamento," the Queen Regent, Christiana, was compelled to accept the Constitution of Cadiz.

This alpine Sitio has remained a favourite with royalty. It was redecorated, the fine lead vases white-washed, for the wedding of La Reina Doña Victoria, and up to 1917 was the summer residence of the court. But in January 1918, on a very windy day, when the snow was thick on the ground and the fountain pools frozen, a fire broke out in the Botica, the old dispensary founded by Charles III. Before it could be got under a large part of the palace was burnt. The Collegiate Church, which suffered in the conflagration was restored within the year; the damage to the palace is being repaired, and the burnt-out wing of the building will soon be ready for use.

In old houses in various parts of Spain I had come upon specimens of La Granja glass, beautiful crystal chandeliers and exquisite frail goblets highly wrought, painted with bouquets of garden flowers, such as delighted Lady Holland. It was the "Fabrica" which first made the name familiar. So it seemed natural when I reached the Sitio to find a crystalline quality in the very air of the place. The faintly-coloured rose-brick walls dressed with pale-grey granite, the lead domes and slate roofs, shone with a curious silvery coldness under the brilliant Castilian sun. The garden paths of dazzling fine white sand, leading to quiet pools reflecting the azure mountains and alleys where white figures and vases stood in rows beneath the light shade of the newly opening leaves, struck the same high note. No spring flowers starred the woodland, no birds sang, the stillness of the hills was complete; the palace and all around it seemed to sleep entranced under a veil of delicate frosted glass.



LA GRANJA  
Lead Vases on the Bridge



LA GRANJA  
One of the Waterfalls

The fête of San Fernando broke the spell. On May 30th the fountains play (*corren*), and the whole village, most of Segovia, and a big contingent from Madrid, assembled in the gardens to see them.

Quite early in the morning motors began to throb under my windows as they ascended the last steep stretch of the avenue up from the bridge. All day the excitement and the crowd grew, until by six o'clock every forest walk right up to El Mar, the artificial lake that supplies the water force, was filled with life and movement. The exhibition was to begin with the lovely display planned by Queen Isabella for her husband. Sixteen great fountains in a line ascending the hill, composed of hundreds of jets, are so arranged as to make a single *coup d'oeil*, a vista crowned by the Fuente de Andrómeda. The vast concourse of nearly 10,000 people were gathered at the lower end in front of King Philip's windows. But not knowing exactly when the display would start, I happened to be standing on the high stone coping of the Andrómeda fountain-basin. For the moment the *rond-point* in the woods was deserted. The still waters of the large pool mirrored an unruffled vision of pale green lime trees, the blue Pico de Peñalara behind them streaked with snow. Then a little bunch of workmen appeared through the trees on the far side of the reservoir. There was a feeling of tension. Suddenly a great plume of water shot up out of the dragon's mouth a hundred feet into the air.

As it came splashing down the whole group came to life. Pierced by the hero's spear, the huge brute writhed and plunged, lashing his fish-like tail with fury, whilst the Princess Andromeda, still chained to the rock, waved her slender arms in joyful deliverance—until the spray blew away and the illusion vanished.

Three minutes afterwards the place swarmed with people; but the crowd quickly rushed to the next point

#### S P A N I S H   G A R D E N S

of vantage, to see the fountain of the Graces and the marble stairway forming eleven waterfalls down to the central parterre in front of the palace. From there we hurried on to the various fountains of the Ocho Calles, but trying to avoid the crush I missed my way in the woods and was too late, unfortunately, to see the "corren" of that complicated maze of statues, shells and sprays, called the Baths of Diana. The sun was setting before the climax of these marvellous water fireworks, when the Jet of La Fama, the highest fountain in Europe, rose to its full 115 feet, making rainbows on the evening clouds—a sight witnessed from Segovia, seven miles away.

## Chapter XIV

### IN CATALONIA

Quan las floreta riuen  
ab las abellas,  
¿ No saben lo que diuhen  
ellas ab ellas ?  
De tota flor que cria  
mont y ribera  
N'es la Verge Maria  
Sa Jardinera.

*Jacinto Verdaguer*  
“ Canso de las Flors.”

THE variety and individuality which make the study of Spanish art such a fascinating pursuit, prove a grave stumbling block when it comes to writing about it. The conflicting influences in the Iberian peninsula overlapped each other; the circumstances and history of each province are different; so that to understand the present, one is always jumping back to the beginnings of things instead of proceeding in sober chronological order.

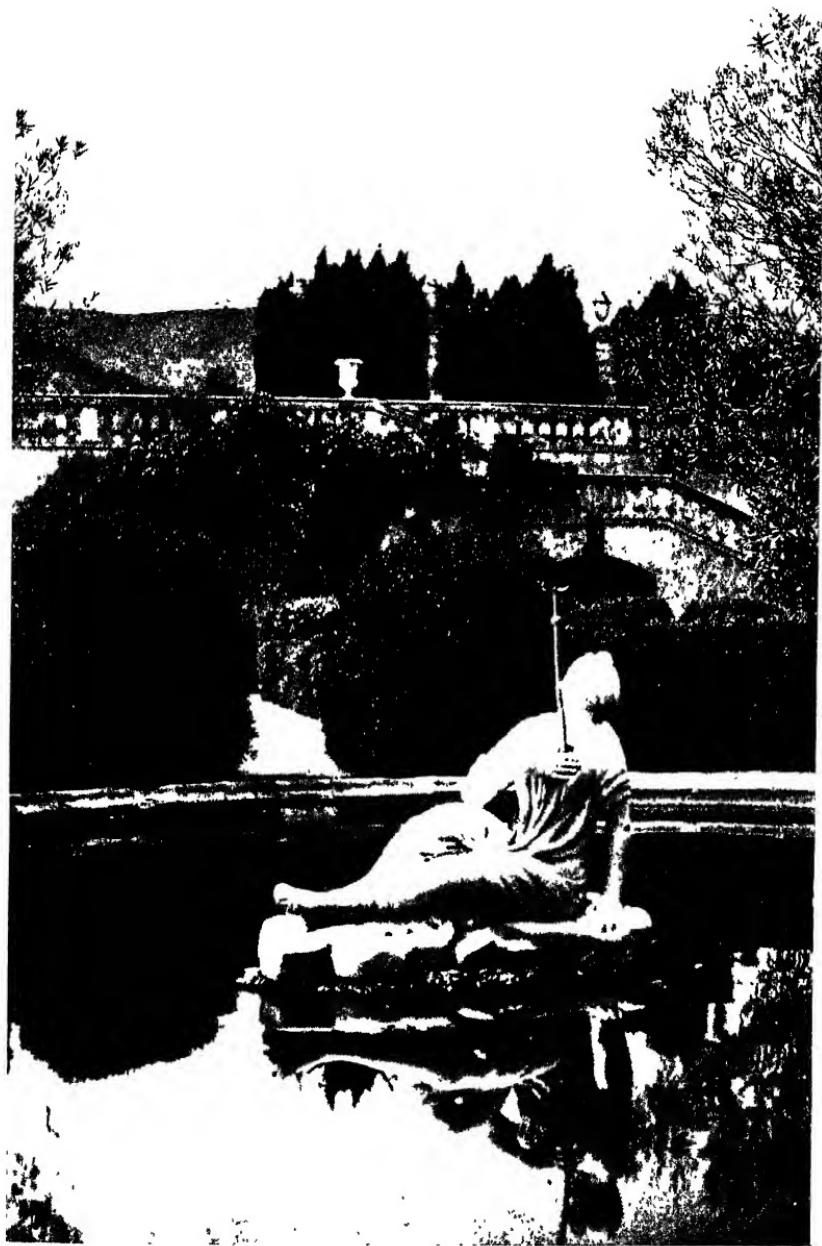
The love of country life, which is more marked in Catalonia than in any other Spanish province, with the exception of the Balearics, is traceable to a northern source as well as to the Moorish inheritance. The link with the old Provençal civilization is very strong in the north-east corner of Spain. The poetic contests called the “ juchs floral ” (floral games), instituted by John I of Arragon, for which the prize is a flower and the title of “ Mastre in Gay Saber ” (Master of the Gay Science), now held on the first Sunday in May at Barcelona, have their prototype in the contests of the troubadours, such as that held at Toulouse in May 1342, when troubadours from all over the world gathered in a

spacious garden to recite their songs and judge those of others. The prize, on that occasion a golden violet, not unnaturally fell to a French competitor.

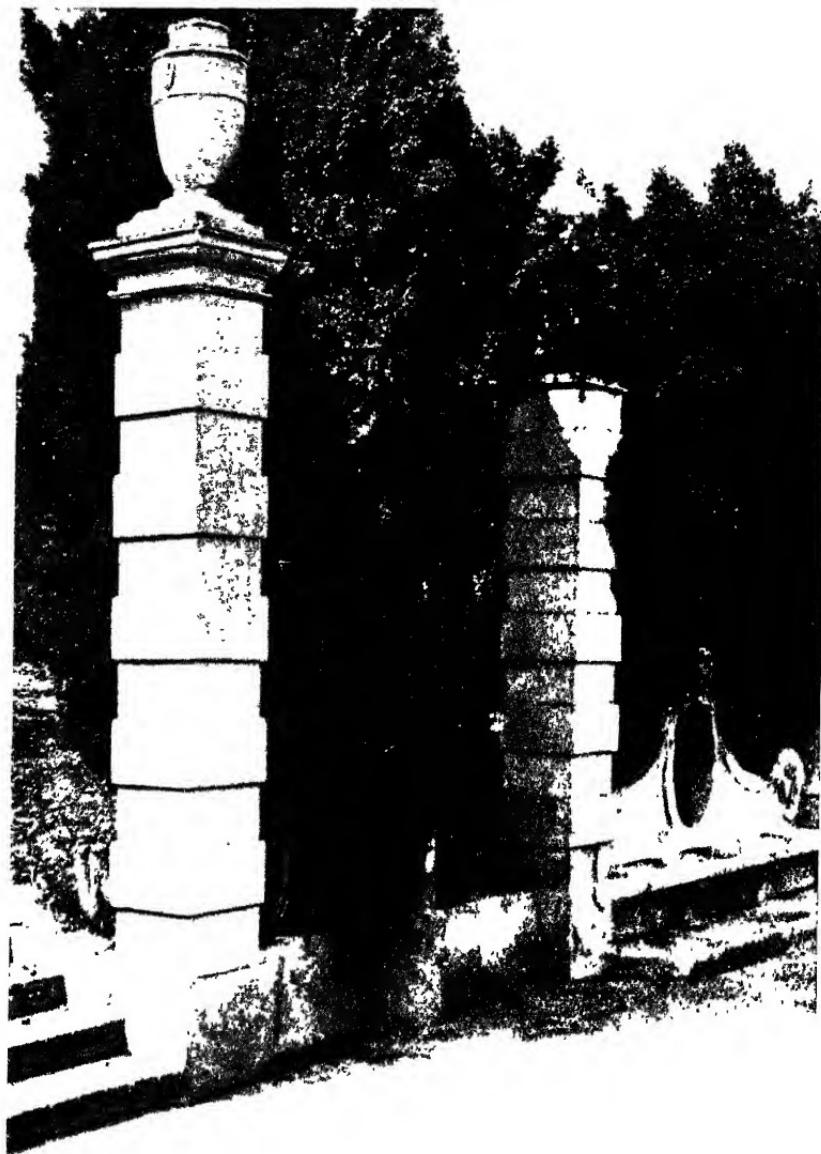
In the heart of the cramped medieval city that forms the nucleus of modern industrial Barcelona, is one of the most astonishing old roof gardens. The Patio de los Naranjos, a name redolent of Andalucia, belongs to the Casa de la Diputación, the headquarters of the Provincial Council, a body which owing to the history and strong individuality of the Catalan people, plays a very important role. Various offices are housed in this large group of buildings, and from a central courtyard a magnificent late Gothic stairway leads to an arcade on the first story out of which the garden opens. The patio, as its name implies, has always been planted with orange trees. Recently it has been repaired and laid out with high tile-bordered beds, an ornamental fountain, and a glorieta of entwined cypresses. An elaborately carved upper gallery runs round two sides of the court, and the long grey gargoyle of the rain-spouts look down in wonder on scarlet geraniums and yellow roses enclosed in a setting of blue and green tiles, and orange trees hung with gleaming fruit planted formally in the pavement—a bewitching mixture of Moslem and Christian art.

The architecture of the province reflects the individuality of its people. Local colour is very strong, but two factors in the history of its development stand out from the rest: one the persistence of Romanesque tradition, the other the absence of Renaissance building. The last is due to the rise of Cadiz and Seville as trading centres after the discovery of the New World. This meant the decline of the Mediterranean port; Barcelona seems to pass from a great Gothic seaport into the eighteenth century with few monuments to mark the intervening years.

What I have called the survival of the Romanesque is



CASA GOMIS  
The Box Parterre



CASA GOMIS  
“A scheme of tall pillars terminating in urns

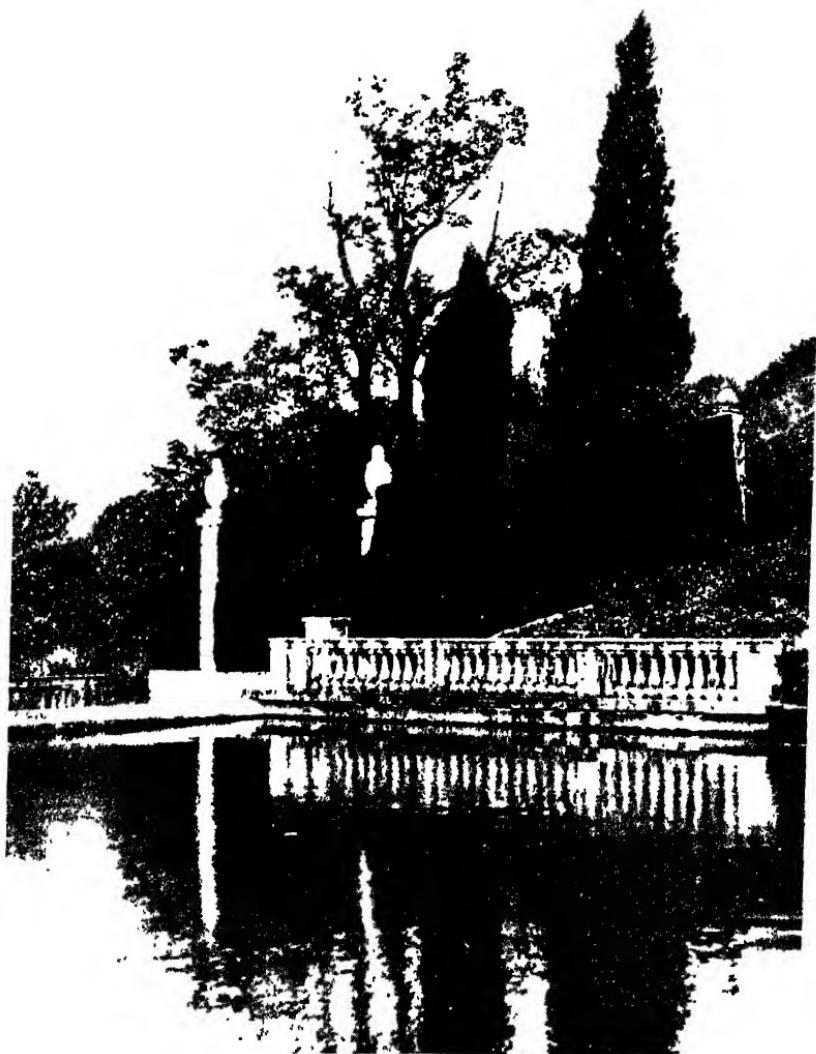
more noticeable in the country. The semi-fortified manor houses that correspond to the "sons" of Majorca may be divided into two types. There is the long low composition, with an open arcade under the eaves extending the whole length of the front, and the house on the plan of a basilica. This remarkable style with a nave as it were, supported by side aisles and a wide arched Catalan entrance like the west door of a Romanesque church, persists down the centuries, so much so that it is often difficult to tell the exact age of a building. The plan is continued in the eighteenth century when the aisles are flat-topped and form open-air promenades or loggias. The centre of the gable-end is filled with a round ornamentation suggestive of a rose window, a space often used for the wall sundial without which no Catalan manor house is complete.

The earliest country buildings round Barcelona were simply watch towers, guarding the vineyards and orchards from local marauders and occasional sea-rovers. Round these towers, the manor house gradually evolved. The Torre Figuerola, the property of the Marquesa de Figuerola, standing at the edge of a little ravine on the mountain side between Sarria and Horta, is an interesting example. Its plain round-arched doorway formed of great slabs of stone let smoothly into the plastered wall reveals no date; it might have been built any time from the twelfth to the eighteenth century, the same severe Catalan entrance hardly varied. But its age is evident, like that of an old parish church from the way the ground has risen around it. The cusped Gothic windows are now filled with square panes of glass, and at some time in the seventeenth century, when the place was enlarged, a terrace was added leading off the first story to the reservoir which is backed by a decorative masonry screen. The nut-walk below, that ends at a cascade wall-fountain, and another terrace at right angles across the head

of the ravine, from which there is a marvellous view of the bay, are part of the same scheme. But the remarkably tall cypress and a ladroner tree, even larger than those of Moorish gardens in Majorca, probably belong to an earlier plan.

Torre Martí-Codolar is an old property lower down the hillside. There is a very large garden with clipped walks, and a terrace near the house, which, when I saw it, was gay with masses of heliotrope, purple verbenas, geraniums and roses. But the buildings have been so much altered at various times that the character of the place has rather suffered. I found Torre Gloria, a few miles further on, less restored and more to my taste.

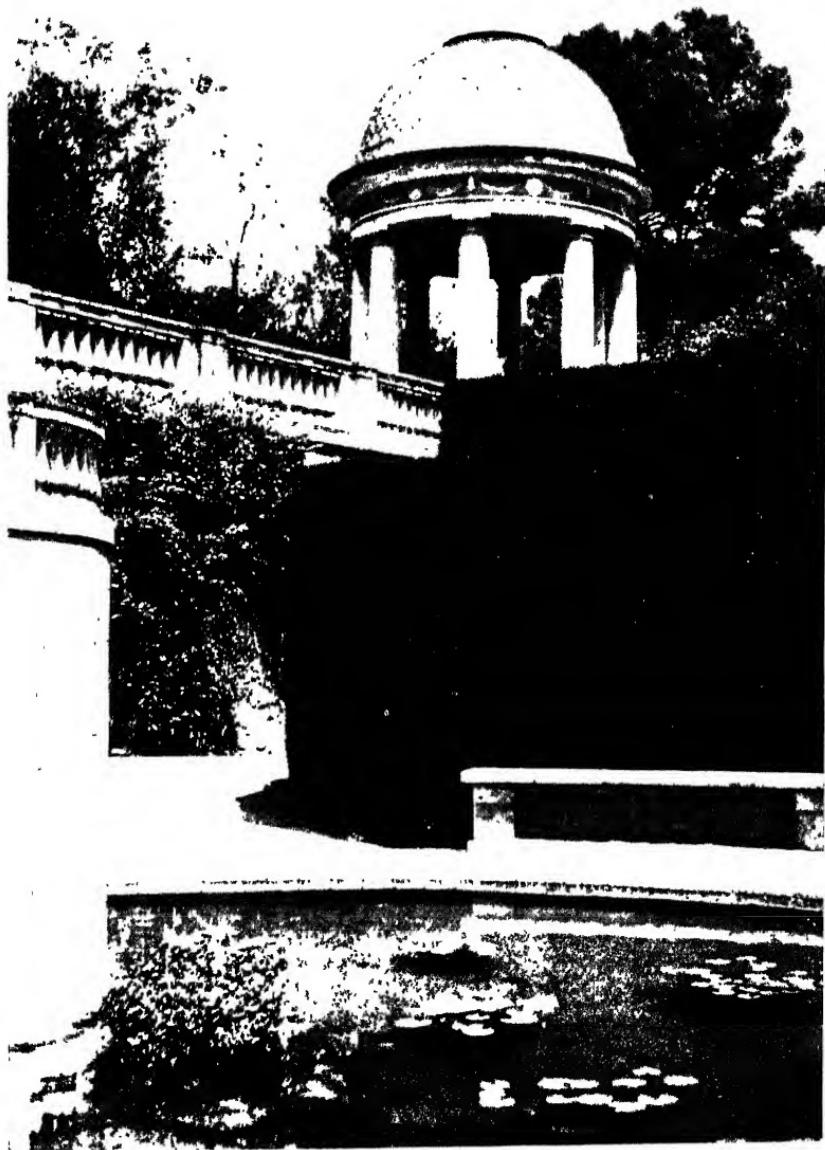
From the modern high road, which has opened up this part of Horta, a rocky lane, better for mules than for motors, led to the forecourt gates. In front of the entrance, shutting off the lower orchard-garden, was a semi-circular wall of clipped cypress with high, stone posts at intervals bearing urns. The square central block of the house had the usual arched doorway, through which alone light penetrated into the zaguán, whence a plain stone stairway ascended to the living rooms on the first story. In this case the flat-topped aisles formed a terrace on either side, which was prolonged across the garden front of the house. On this terrace stood two little pavilions or guard-houses, a quaint and invariable feature of these Catalan villas; sometimes they are at the gates, sometimes on a far-off terrace, sometimes on the terrace of the house itself, but on one level or another, there they will be found, part of the traditional plan. Graceful pepper trees planted close up to the base of the walls, like the Maulsari trees of Rajputana gardens, completely shaded the flight of curving steps down to the parterre garden. Its box-edged beds were so overgrown with shrubs it was some time before I saw the upper terrace at the far end with the gloria



EL LABERINTO  
The Great Reservoir



EL LABERINTO  
The Water Pavilion



EL LABERINTO  
One of the Terraces



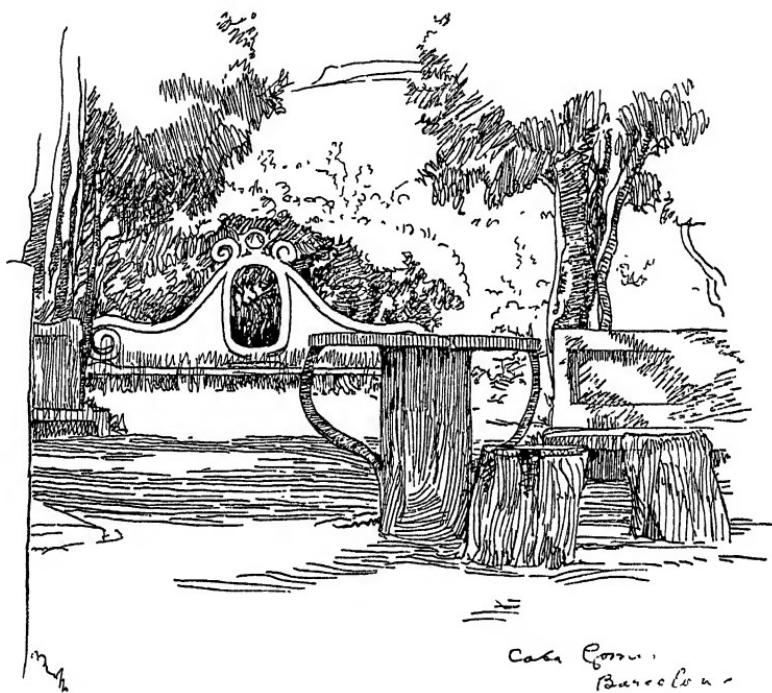
EL LABERINTO  
The Exit from the Maze

over its ornamental arch that gives its name to the property. It is an amusing piece of Baroque architecture. On each side of it a lovely pillared glorieta, with open iron-work dome, resembling the iron crowns of Catalan belfries, was smothered in climbing roses. Everywhere about the garden architectural features emphasised the design, making it appear much bigger than it was. A semi-circular seat with a pillar in the centre formed part of another glorieta close to the house. In the lower orchard, a raised walk bordered with pomegranates ended in a balcony with a stone balustrade from which to enjoy the sea view. Even the service court next to the lane was treated with the same care, and planted with acacias in rows, pleached to form a summer awning.

The Baroque age in Spain was a period of such splendour that one would expect to come across numerous examples of Baroque palaces and gardens. As a matter of fact they are rare. The narrow streets of most Spanish cities are adorned with fine Gothic and Renaissance palaces, but when the seventeenth century is reached there is a gap; apart from a few leading families, power and money seem to pass from the nobles into the hands of the king and the church. It is the Cartuja, the Jesuits, or the Palace of the Holy Office we must visit if we wish to see the full magnificence of the style. Catalonia is the exception. In that province, secular and commercial influences have always made themselves felt, and although there is nothing in the town of Barcelona quite comparable to the gorgeous palace of the Marqués de Penaflor at Ecija, there are numerous country villas, as Miss Nichol points out in her book on Spanish and Portuguese gardens, corresponding to the suburban houses and "pleasant substantial country seats" of Georgian England.

One of the most characteristic Baroque gardens near Barcelona is the Casa de Gomis, belonging to the Marquésa de Gomis, for it is a house and garden designed at one

and the same time, forming a single composition, and not, as is so often the case, a seventeenth-century garden built round a much older dwelling house. High iron gates lead on to a terrace at the bottom of the garden overlooking the main road from Gracia to Horta, and at each end of it are the little guard-house pavilions. A steep path through flower-



Casa Gomis, Barcelona—Garden Seat

filled terraces, like the terraces of a Moorish garden, brings one to the platform of a plain and solidly built house with delightful roof terraces on each side of its forecourt. Behind the house, in a secluded wall garden, huge bushes of oleander planted in the deep box-edged parterre shade the central fountain-pool. A group of cypress, and roses trained against the walls, are the only other ornamentation on this



TORRE BRUNO CUADROS



TORRE FERRATER  
The Baroque Tank

level; the designer has reserved his efforts for the high paved terrace at the far end that forms a great open-air sala.

This terrace, approached by a double stairway with a well-proportioned balustrade, has wings coming forward repeating the plan of the house, and, on the other side, a parapet shutting off the upper garden supports a scheme of tall pillars terminating in urns, and shorter pedestals with marble busts, linked by masonry seats, treated with all the freedom and fanciful billowing lines of the period. The whole conception, worked out in cream sandstone, white marble and faintly tinted plaster, thrown into strong relief against a background of clipped cypress, is one of the happiest creations of Baroque garden building.

Some distance along the coast, behind the town of Badalona, is another delightful garden scheme. It surrounds the old manor house of the Ferrater family, Torre Ferrater. In Spain exact dates are often hard to ascertain, but here it is known that the building was restored in 1684, that is in the reign of Charles II, last of the Hapsburgs, when outside Catalonia the country was at its lowest ebb. The house is finely placed at the head of a little valley, where the sun-baked hills frame an exquisite glimpse of the sea. The long building which combines the typical upper gallery with promenades on the side roofs, stands on an immense paved terrace with an ornamental tank at the south-west end. Twelve little figures, one for each month, decorate the terrace balustrade. Below this, the main garden juts out in the same dramatic way as the lower garden at Cuzco. At Cuzco, it will be remembered, a stone-pillared pergola like those of Eastern gardens ran round the outer walk. I saw no sign of such at Torre Ferrater until I looked over the bastion. It had not been forgotten—there it was below me shading a narrow second terrace that made an intriguing hidden walk half way down the rampart. The manor house is as fascinating inside

as it is out, and its charming chatelaine, who showed me over it, takes the greatest pride in its old decoration and Catalan furniture.

The next valley further along the coast is protected by the Castillo Solferino, which is still inhabited. Close to it is Casa Bimbiches, another beautifully placed old manor house. In fact, each valley going north has one or more of these country houses. Some can be found quite close to Barcelona, but there the grounds have been curtailed by the growth of the suburbs—Torre Bruno Cuadros, in Sarria, for example, where half the garden has been cut away.

I have left to the last, El Laberinto, in Horta, the largest and most famous private garden near Barcelona, because though the house is old, the garden built about a hundred and thirty years ago has eclipsed it. It belongs to the Marqués Alfarrás, but the place is never called Torre Alfarrás, but always El Laberinto, from the great cypress labyrinth that occupies its principal terrace. At the side of the house—a large seventeenth-century structure with an eighteenth-century façade—is the customary parterre garden; but the new lay-out on a big scale made at the end of the eighteenth century, owing to the nature of the ground, is not in the centre of the earlier work. The difficulty had been got over by planting a semi-circular hedge of cypress at the entrance to the upper gardens. This hedge which disguises the difference between the two plans, is strengthened at intervals with tall stone posts very similar to those at Torre Gloria and Casa Gomis. Decorative pillars standing alone or combined in architectural schemes are so frequently met with in Catalan gardens, one wonders what is their special *raison d'être*. Are they a tribute to Santa Maria del Pilar whose vogue christens half the little girls in Spain Pilar, for short, and whose much-revered shrine is at Zaragoza in the neighbouring province

of Aragon, or does the pillar motif point far back to some remote Eastern origin?

The terraces that lie beyond the cypress hedge merge into the woodlands without any very perceptible boundary. In this respect El Laberinto resembles an Italian villa garden, like those that fade away into the ilex woods above Tivoli and Frascati; but its details are thoroughly Spanish, from the tall pillars at the approach, to the tile-roofed pavilion on the parapet of the great irrigation tank. Half-way between these two points, a Flaxman-like plaque marks the entrance to the maze: Ariadne, the King of Crete's daughter, gives Theseus the thread she has spun, to trace his way back after killing the Minotaur. But at the heart of this labyrinth, in place of that horrid beast, stands a figure of Daphne, and those who win through will find her there ever eluding pursuit in her laurel-bush.

The same engaging fancy has created the little pavilion on the reservoir. It is a gem of Catalan architecture. Its roof of clear yellow tiles, relieved by touches of sage green, is in perfect harmony with the soft, rich colouring of its surroundings—so unlike the hard, cold brilliance of Castilian royal gardens, or the vivid contrasts of Andalucia. No detail has been omitted that could add to its charm, even the late eighteenth-century furniture with its suggestion of Chippendale has been specially designed to fit the room inside. And when the doors are opened and the shutters flung back, it is difficult to decide which is the more enchanting view, that across the reservoir with its tranquil reflections of tapering cypresses and rounded pines that clothe the purple-shadowed hills, or the veiled loveliness southward, where the faint outline of the Balearics floats on the limit of the sea.

## Chapter XV

### SOME RECENT GARDEN HISTORY

“The dignity of the dwelling is in the dweller.”

*Arab proverb.*

ANDALUCIA, the Balearics, the two Castiles, and Catalonia are by no means the only Spanish provinces in which to look for interesting old gardens. In Valencia, where Italian influence had been most felt—it was at its height under the Borgia Pope whose family came from Játiva—there is the celebrated garden of Monteforte. Its high clipped hedges, enshrining classical statues, are a favourite subject with Señor Don Santiago Rusiñol, the Spanish painter of gardens. In the town of Valencia itself there is an important Jardín Botánico, and a charming public garden called La Glorieta, laid out in 1817 on the site of the glacis. Galicia is another province with a characteristic style; Portuguese influence was strong on the north-east coast. The Quinta Camerosa at Oca, has a fantastic stone boat in the centre of one of the reservoirs, and other unusual architectural details.

Returning to the east coast and to Andalucia, a garden called El Buen Retiro, in the vega of Málaga, must not be forgotten, for it has beautiful old fountains and a thoroughly Oriental feature in a broad, cypress-lined canal. The towns of Cadiz and Jerez both have a distinctive style of garden-patio, and so has the little town of Arcos-de-la-Frontera, perched on its sandstone bluff and surrounded on three sides by the river Guadalete.



ARBOL DE AMOR  
The Alameda—Ronda



The alamedas (garden-promenades) of Andalucian towns are specially attractive, for, following Moorish custom, they are nearly always placed on the edge of a cliff or river-bank so as to command a fine prospect. The time to saunter down their avenues is when the Judas trees are out—"Arbol de Amor," the Spanish call them. Then the March sun, which magically transforms the plane trees, veiling their silver columns in a shower of delicate green, shines through the rosy-mauve petals of the Arbol de Amor with thrilling sweetness; and behind the dancing flower-laden boughs a sapphire sky is chequered with pearly clouds, racing before the keen spring wind from the sierras. But, so quickly does spring pass in the South, down by the river roses are already blooming, and the scent of them rises, mingling deliciously with the heavier perfume of the orange blossoms.

The Alameda at Ronda is one of these fascinating gardens. Its gate-posts and railed-in platforms from which there is a wonderful view of the old town and the Sierra de Ronda behind it, must have been built about the same date as the picturesque Baroque courtyard of the bull-ring close by. But though architecturally the garden belongs to the late seventeenth century, its planting is unmistakably Moorish. Round the cypress glorieta on the shallow upper terrace there was been a Persian lilac thicket, like those in every old Kashmir bagh, and the deep hedges that border the raised walks, and the narrow irrigated beds between the plane trees filled with iris, pink roses and lilies, are met with wherever the tradition of Moslem gardening lingers. In the former Spanish colony of Mexico a large garden, the Borda Garden at Cuernavaca, was built on these lines in 1750.

It was just at this point, when the Baroque style had spent its force on the Continent of Europe, that England began to lead in plastic and domestic art. The sober, well-proportioned Georgian house of the day, with superb family

portraits and landscapes let into its painted panelling, with Chippendale's strong but finely-made mahogany furniture in its light, moderate-sized rooms, treasures of Bristol and Waterford glass and "sets for the desserts," as the Chelsea and Derby figures were termed, laid out on the polished tables, was the last word in comfort, beauty and distinction. But the English feeling for romance, curbed in the house, escaped and broke loose in the garden, and the so-called natural style was evolved. This fashion for destroying gardens and enlarging parks, christened in France "*Le Jardin Anglais*," was, unfortunately, the English fashion most admired and copied on the Continent. But Spain never fell under its spell. Lady Holland, visiting the Alcázar at Seville in 1803, noticed this fact, and adds in her Journal: "The English taste for simplicity and nature which places a house in the midst of a grazing field where the sheep din 'Ba, ba,' all day long, has, by offending me so much, perhaps driven me to the opposite extreme, and made me prefer to the *nature* of a grass field and round clump the *built* gardens of two centuries back."

The happy escape of Spanish gardens from the destructive "English taste" (already referred to in connection with Cuzco) was not only due to national feeling. The Carlist wars were another factor, for they put a stop to building enterprise in the first half of the nineteenth century. The result to-day is the unbroken tradition in Spanish garden-craft that lends such interest and importance to modern Spanish work.

The Parque Güell at Barcelona cannot be photographed with success. Perhaps this shows the fundamental weakness of this extraordinary creation of Spanish industrial "new art." It is pleasanter to turn to the private gardens of the remarkable Güell family who have done so much for their native city. The Torre Güell, belonging to the Conde de

Güell, Marqués de Comillas, is a typical Catalan villa, the garden of which is kept up in its old style with the addition of many beautiful antique busts and statues. Within the house is a magnificent collection of painted wooden sculpture, an art in which Spain excelled. Some of the finest pieces of Alonzo Cano and other masters are quite small, much under life size, and this influence is reflected in the small figures usually found in Spanish gardens that seem to suggest designs for works in faience, rather than marble or stone. Another member of the family, Baron Güell, has an old manor house with delightful roof terraces and galleries, situated at Pedralbes above the Franciscan nunnery. It is called La Font del Leó, from the lion fountain brought from the spring on the hill above, and set up in the gardens that have been restored and planted with loving care and taste.

Quite another spirit animates the new work at Seville. A leader in the present revival of Moorish gardening is the French designer, M. Forestier, who has laid out the surroundings for the Hispano-American exhibition. He has also designed the beautiful little garden of the Casa del Rey Moro overhanging the Tajo at Ronda, which romantic spot belongs to the Duquesa de Parcent. A modern country place near Algeciras, Guada Corte, belonging to the Marquis of Bute, is famed for its collection of eucalyptus trees, trees that grow there luxuriantly framing exquisite views of the Rock of Gibraltar.

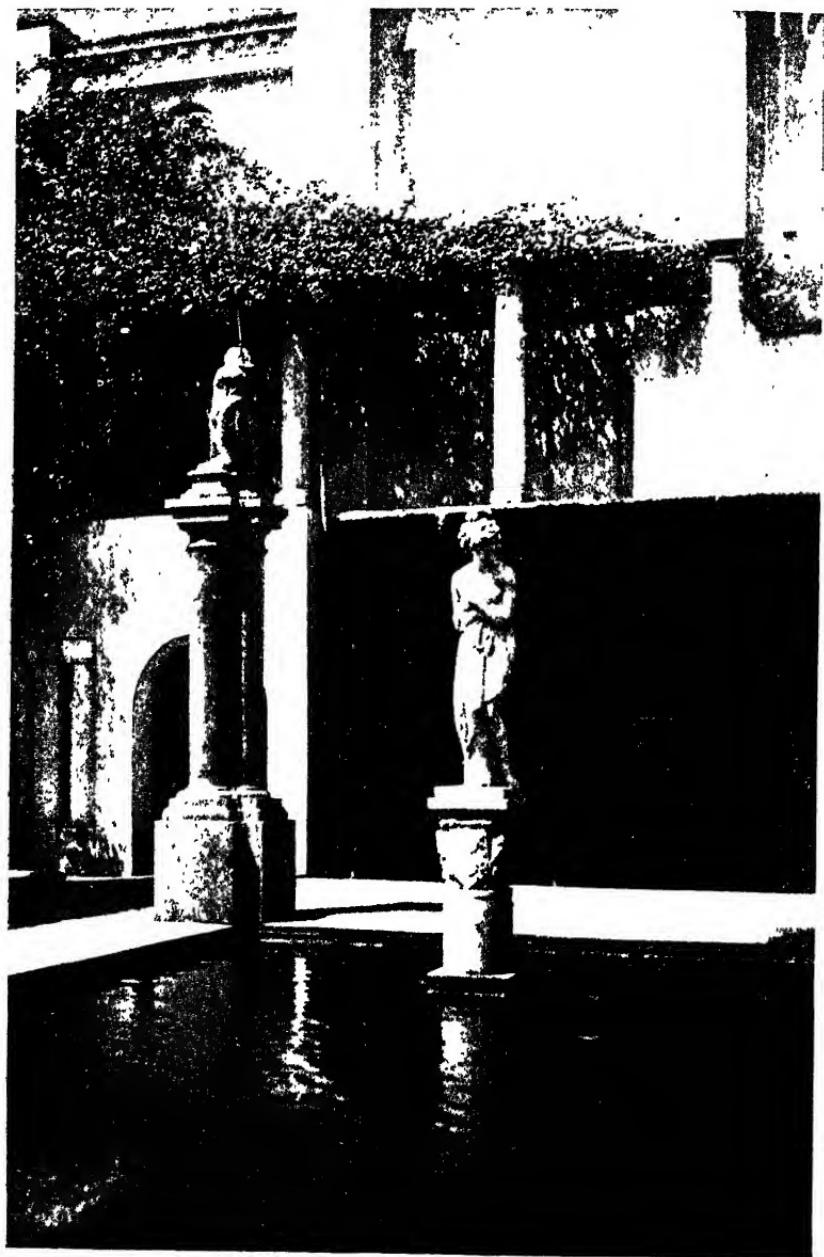
One of the latest and most imaginative examples of Spanish garden building is the Carmen of Señor Don José Acosta at Granada. Señor Acosta, who is a well-known sculptor, has designed it himself, and the plan is carried out in a successful mixture of Arab and Roman construction. The main entrance through the house, which stands at the top of a grand series of terraces and looks out over the wide Vega, gives the keynote of the scheme, a scheme in which

house and garden are closely interlinked, forming a perfect setting for Señor Acosta's collection of Arab and Roman antiquities. In planting the garden is Moorish. Cypresses mask the high stepped white walls that close it in on either side; they are woven into complicated little glorietas, or trained flat against the masonry as backgrounds for fountains and statuary. But at present, as far as the planting and building have gone, there seems to be a northern sculptor's fear of colour; white walls, white flowers (chiefly banksia roses), evergreen trees and blue sky reflected in the pools, is the entire range of the pattern; but a restraint so marked may well be Spanish in its intensity. The most curious feature of the place, however, is the catacombs.

Some old cuevas in the hillside first suggested the idea of making catacombs. And in this labyrinth, shrines are being set up for the gods of early days; for Naga the Water-snake, earliest of all; for the Nile gods, the Man-headed Assyrian bull, the gentle Buddha, the great Indian Trimurti, Brahma, Vishnu, Siva—even the little gods of Luck and Chance, so popular to-day—who are banished to this dim underworld while the gods of Greece and Rome disport themselves in the sunlight. But the Iberian Goddess of the Place has no niche allotted to her. The Carmen itself is her shrine. As to who she is opinions vary. Some say La Patrona de Granada, borne in procession on the second Sunday in September; others, she is surely Santa Maria del Pilar, who protects the whole country under her ample cloak. Mr. Havelock Ellis, in the *Soul of Spain*, writes: "The special character of the Spanish temperament and of its developments in literature and art are marked not by classical feeling, but by a quality rising and sinking with the rise and fall of Gothic, which we call the Romantic spirit." Mr. Bernard Beven thinks otherwise, and says so, in a recent publication on Spanish art: "The national temperament, sombre as it is, is a Baroque tempera-



RONDA  
Jardin del Rey Moro



GRANADA  
In the Acosta Garden

#### SOME RECENT GARDEN HISTORY

ment, full of fancies and extravagancies, warlike, religious to the verge of superstition, yet inconsequential, and in Spain even the Baroque style, carried to a degree of ornateness unparalleled elsewhere in Europe, compels admiration for its dignity and splendour." And the truth is in all these definitions.

For deep in the soul of Spain lies the spirit of adventure. Don Quixote was no passing satire on the extravagant fancies of a dying chivalry; he is the Spanish hero of all time. The prolonged adventure of the Crusades is reflected in the triumphant Gothic of the Catholic kings. The adventure of the New World rapidly changed the surface elaboration of Spanish Renaissance into a Baroque style with flights of fancy bred by fabulous stories of Las Indias, where anything might happen among strange men, strange beasts and plants. The crusade which followed against the new ideals in Northern Europe had a noble origin, but in the gripe of the Holy Office imagination and feeling were stifled and the spirit of the country crushed. But the spirit of man, "the candle of the Lord," is never blown out. Its votive light has been kept burning in the darkest archways of time. Now the growing effort of a new day is visible everywhere. In Barcelona it has flared up into strange forms of Iberian "New Art." In Seville the garden sunshine of the Moorish past captivates men's minds. But when these elements are temporarily worked out, some new inspiration will gather force: it may be the Baroque influence of Las Indias will re-inspire Spanish gardens.



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